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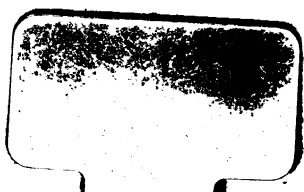
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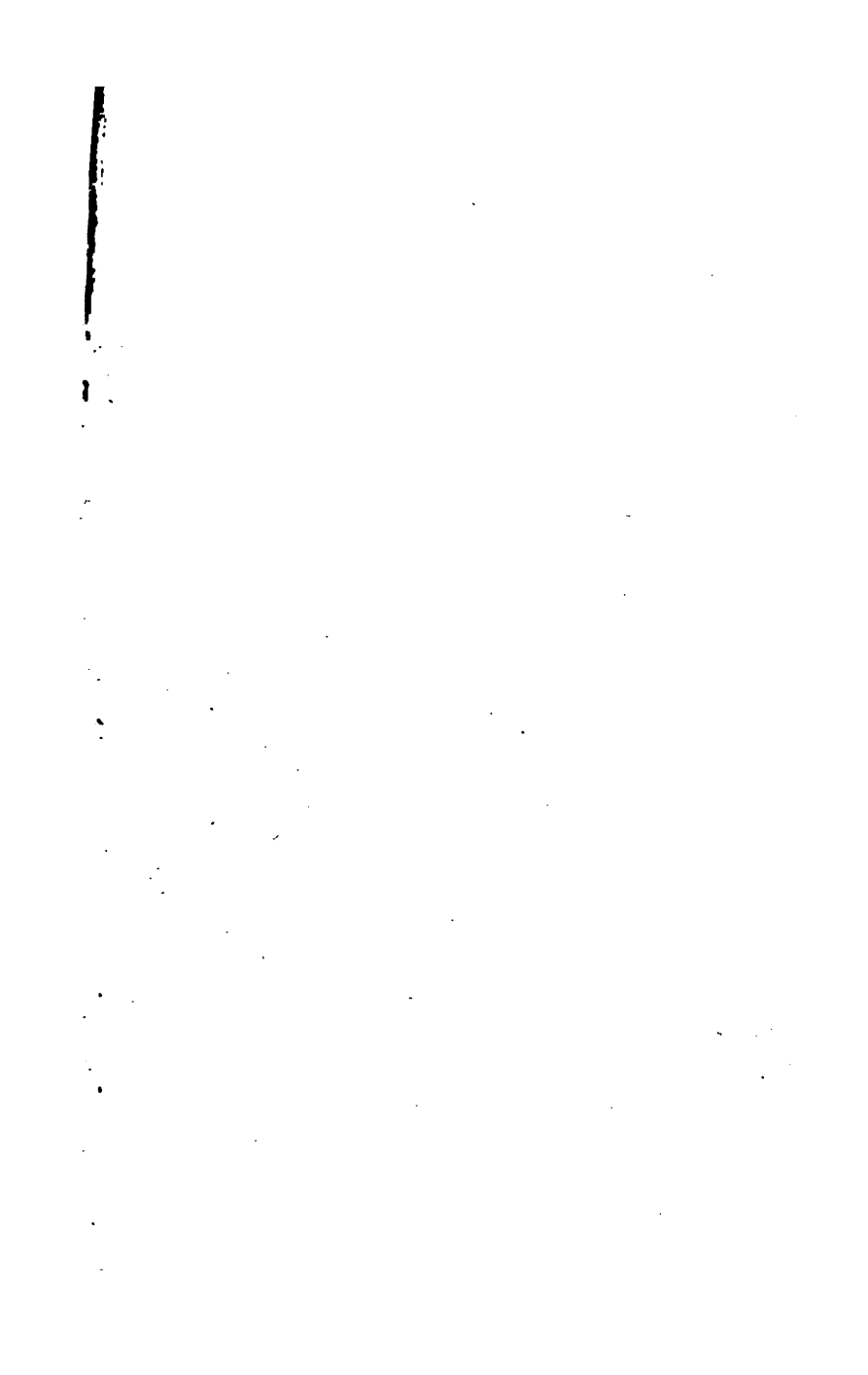
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THE
PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS
OF THE
WORLD AND THE CHURCH.

A PRUDENT MAN FORESEETH THE EVIL AND HIDETH
HIMSELF; BUT THE SIMPLE PASS ON, AND ARE PUNISHED.—

PROVERBS XXII. 3.

Seeley
THE

PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS

OF THE

WORLD AND THE CHURCH.

100
30

BY

A CLERGYMAN OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.

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PREFACE.

The following pages are presented to the public, in the earnest hope, that being particularly suited to the times, they may be instrumental under the Divine blessing, in creating a circle on the languid sea of religious sentiment, in arousing some, who are careless and at ease, to an increasing liveliness on the most important of all subjects: and in conveying a word of seasonable consolation to others, who "mourn in Zion."

In the opening Lecture it is attempted to be proved that the times are perilous; in those immediately ensuing, our peculiar duties at such times are pointed out; and in conclusion are shewn the believer's privileges and prospects.

The second Lecture has been found far the most difficult. To exhibit an accurate picture of the actual state of affairs at a period so uncommonly mutable and eventful as the present, is a task not less arduous than the delineation of a landscape on a very stormy day. This moment a gleam of sun-

shine, bursting forth, throws a smile of cheerfulness over the entire face of nature : presently the clouds return, and envelope the scenery in a mantle of gloom. Under these circumstances the author has been no little perplexed in his endeavours to represent matters as they really are,—since the portrait which would be faithful to day, might cease to be so to-morrow ; but he has given that view of them which, after much consideration, inquiry, and prayer, has appeared to him the most just. Of its correctness, the candid reader will judge for himself.

In the course of the book are introduced such occasional quotations from other writers as appeared suitable, and calculated to render it at once interesting and profitable. The appendix contains further documents from various pens, too extensive to be inserted in the body of the work, but which serve to corroborate or illustrate the writer's statements. They will be found a valuable portion of the volume.

In some of his opinions he may very possibly be mistaken. Of course he presumes not to predict but even should the events which he looks for, never be realized, the counsel that he offers will not be without its advantage, if followed ; should those events occur, the advice will prove of immeasurable importance.

It would be altogether in vain for any writer on divinity to hope to meet the views of all parties in these days ; so diversified are the sentiments of

Christians, especially on topics connected with Prophecy. However, if there be but a coincidence in the grand outlines and fundamentals, we should guard against a captious and disputatious temper on minor points; otherwise unity, or indeed any comfortable Christian communion, is a blessing to be despaired of.

It is well observed by an eminent living minister,¹ that ‘ a cordial agreement in the essentials of the Gospel *should* induce us to put up with minor differences; and a superior and constant engagement of soul to the most important objects of religion *will* draw off, *comparatively*, the attention from inferior ones, leaving us neither leisure or relish for them.’

The author has, throughout, studiously steered by the shore of Revelation, aided by the beacon-lights of the older divines; convinced, that the grievous theological errors of the age have chiefly resulted from persons forsaking this safe navigation, and launching out into a perilous ocean of daring speculation, where they have lost both themselves and their followers in what, it is to be feared, are ‘ the depths of Satan.’

He has further to intreat, that if in speaking of certain tenets and systems of religion, he should seem to any to have expressed himself too strongly, he may be understood as speaking entirely of *things*, not *persons*; of principles, not individuals. He trusts he can appeal to the searcher of hearts, to testify to his love for all his fellow-beings; even

¹ Rev. William Jay.

those most opposed to him in opinion : but the more unfeignedly we love others, the more shall we abhor those doctrines, whereby we consider them endangered.

Love to the soul is the soul of love, and the time is arrived, when it behoves us to speak out, and designate things by their proper names, if we would not have persons hood-winked and deluded, to their everlasting ruin.

In conclusion, the writer requests, that, should the Christian Reader approve of his work, notwithstanding numerous imperfections that may be found in it—written as it was amidst many interruptions, and other labours ; he will kindly offer up his prayers to GOD, that it may be blessed to the ends humbly designed, namely, the good of man, and the Divine glory.

July 17, 1837.

LECTURE I.

THE SINS OF THE AGE AND NATION.

"Shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sin,"—ISAIAH lviii. 1.

It is a very prevalent opinion, the grounds of which we shall consider presently, that the united empire is now standing in a situation critically perilous.¹ Persons who differ on almost every other question, appear unanimous on this : and he must view affairs through a very peculiar medium indeed, who does not descry a storm lowering in the political horizon, and threatening hourly to burst, and pour upon these islands its elements of mischief. May the Almighty in his infinite mercy grant, that the apprehensions so generally entertained respecting the country may prove to have been groundless ; but it is in the firm and deliberate conviction that they are very far otherwise, that the writer of the following pages proceeds.

In enumerating some of the sins of the age, we

¹ See Appendix, Note I.

shall begin where the Lord does,—‘ at his sanctuary,’ or professing church ; and we shall notice,

1. *The evident lukewarmness of nominal Christians.* How universally are the scriptures disseminated : what swarms of religious publications issue from the press : what numbers of persons run to and fro, whereby knowledge is increased ; all in addition to the ordinary means and opportunities of religious improvement. What could have been done for this portion of his vineyard, that the Lord hath not done for it ? Where then are the fruits ? In what are the majority of nominal protestants better than practical atheists—baptized heathens ? Look to facts—these will be taken as the expression of our real sentiments at the day of judgment. Thousands of persons never enter a place of worship at all, but content themselves in a voluntary and perpetual exile from the means of spiritual instruction. Neglecting the command, ‘ not to forsake the assembling themselves’ in the place which JEHOVAH has appointed, to put his name there, and where he has promised his blessing ; they live without God,—that is, *atheists*,¹ in the world ; setting a pestiferous example to all around them. Others take no *trouble* for the truth’s sake : they will not go any distance to hear it proclaimed : nay, if you bring the divine message to their very doors, the full soul, surfeited with secular cares and pleasures, despises the honey-comb. Verily we do

¹ *αθεοι*, see Ephesians ii. 12.

seem to require the flames of persecution to warm our icy hearts—to separate the scum from the pure water of life, and cause them to ‘boil up’¹ with fervid affections toward GOD and his gospel.

Others do, customarily, attend the preaching of the word, yet continue as uninfluenced by what is uttered, as the deaf walls around them. They can hear the most solemn appeals, the most startling statements, the most cogent arguments for conversion to God, and devotedness of living, urged, too, with an earnestness and power, that one might suppose would almost awaken the dead, yet treat them all with the self-same apathy, as if the history of redemption, and the realities of eternity, were a cunningly-devised fable, the figment of priestcraft.

Others, again, are convinced of the truth in their judgments; they assent to the gospel while it is announced; but as soon as the sermon is concluded, return to their ordinary cogitations, as the horse rushes into the battle. Doubtless there is much running after popular preachers, much descanting on the style, and matter, and manner, of the orator—but ‘who believes his report?’ who is converted? They hear his words, but they will not do them; their mouth showeth much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, “he is unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on his instrument.”² Their understandings are enlightened and

¹ Ps. xlv. 1. Heb.

² Ezekiel xxxiii. 31, 32.

informed ; their fancies pleased ; their taste gratified ; and perhaps their feelings are transiently excited ; but alas ! they themselves are not won to Christ. The arrows of God's quiver strike against their hard hearts as against a wall of adamant ; and they are rendered more difficult of impression, more ' sermon-proof ' than ever.

As a further evidence of lukewarmness in religion, we may mention the spurious LIBERALITY still so popular ; a liberality that confounds truth with error, heaven with hell ; that puts darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter ; in a word, a liberality which is in diametrical opposition to the oracles of GOD. For example, these declare *Christ* to be " the way, the truth, and the life ; " ¹ without whom " no man can go unto the Father ; " and in whom " whosoever believeth not, shall be damned. " ² But this system maintains one set of opinions on religion to be as safe as another, provided only its holders be sincere. ' General information, useful knowledge, liberality of sentiment, no bigotry, all creeds alike, these compose the great Diana of our modern Ephesians. ' ³

This false liberality is a device of Satan, to delude souls to their eternal ruin. It is a devil in the guise of an angel of light. It carries on it the aspect of amiableness of feeling, and enlargement of sentiment, and accordingly is highly esteemed

¹ John xiv. 6.

² Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 36.

³ Rev. Hugh McNelle.

by the unthinking. But the things which are highly esteemed among men, are abomination in the sight of God; whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, and to whom nothing is more dear than truth. This latitudinarianism is a decisive proof of spiritual lukewarmness. He who is so very complacent toward all religions, shows himself a true friend of none. The real parent would not have the child divided.¹ A loyal subject cannot bear a pretender. 'When Darius offered Alexander ten thousand talents to divide Asia equally with him, the latter answered, that the earth could not bear two suns, nor Asia two kings.' It has been well remarked, that Satan desires no better troops than lukewarm Christians, and the Lord Jesus Christ abhors none more. He prefers infidelity to lukewarm Christianity, "I would thou wert cold or hot; so then, because thou art neither, I will spue thee out of my mouth,"

2. Let us now advert to *the awful profanation of THE SABBATH*. This is one of our most grievous national transgressions. "God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it: and commanded it to be kept holy. Nor is there any one commandment, at the breach of which he appears more incensed. How did he menace the Israelites on this behalf. "I said unto them in the wilderness, hallow my sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your

¹ 1 Kings iii. 26.

God. Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against me; they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them: they polluted my sabbaths;" (this was the crowning of their pyramid of crime; their capital offence :) "they polluted my sabbaths, *then* I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness."¹

And the reasons of the divine indignation at the breach of this commandment are manifest. In the first place, it is a sin of very great ingratitude. "The sabbath was made for man;"² for his mental repose and spiritual refreshment. But the profane pervert into a curse what God in his mercy designed to be a blessing. They make what ought to be the best, 'the queen of days,' the worst of all the seven.

Again, the profanation of this day is an open avowal of ungodliness. Other sins may be perpetrated in secret, and consequently without the same scandal: but this is committed in the eye of the whole community. A sabbath-breaker *cannot* escape observation. This is therefore an open insult offered to the divine lawgiver. It is a throwing down of the gauntlet of defiance to his authority. It is a broad declaration of war. It is

¹ Ezek. xx. 20, 21.

² Its being made for *man*, does not prevent its being the Lord's day: because, in every instance, God's glory is associated with our advantage.

publicly announcing that we will not have Christ to reign over us. It is saying unto God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"¹

Besides, the all-wise well knows, that the observance of his holy day is the grand means of stamping and maintaining an impression of sacredness on the popular mind; and therefore, that were this neglected, religion herself would very quickly decline, and perish from under the heavens. Yes, circumstanced as we are at present, there must "be a form of godliness," otherwise there would soon cease to be "the power." Devotional observances are to piety, what the body is to the soul: wanting these, she would speedily languish, and be chilled to death in the cold unkindly atmosphere of a carnal world. Were the flame of devotion unprotected by a shrine, it would quickly be extinguished by "blasts from hell." Without the means of grace we should shortly lose the grace of the means, and 'sink into the blindness, and brutishness, and sad alienation of paganism.' In illustration of this, how rude, how barbarous, how vicious, how heathenish are those neighbourhoods and nations found, which lie remote from sabbath ministrations.

We may be sure, *Satan* would never indulge us

¹ Job xxi. 14, 15.

with a day of rest. No, his grand aim is to keep us toiling on, in total forgetfulness of our everlasting interests, that so we may live and die in our sins, and become his sure victims for ever. Accordingly they in whom that wicked one worketh, never kept a sabbath at all. In France, during the first revolution, the agents of Satan publicly abolished the Lord's day; while those portions of the human family, who are at this moment under the power of darkness, have no sabbath, nor ever have had. These facts should cause us to appreciate, more deeply than we do, this most ancient and divine institution.

Alas! how flagrantly is it profaned in these professedly Christian lands—by the keeping open of ale-houses, taverns, and club-rooms; by markets; by the publishing of Sunday newspapers; by the running of stages and other vehicles; and the sailing of steam-boats and other vessels, to omit less overt acts of its desecration. What vast multitudes retire into the country for irreligious recreation, or employ the holy Sabbath in travelling; what crowds assemble in places of intemperate indulgence or frivolous amusement; and how many spend part of the day in adjusting some worldly business, and the residue in sloth and festivity.¹

Truly, the inhabitants of this country have cause to blush and tremble, when they contrast the mode in which *they* commonly spend the holy day with

¹ Rev. Thomas Scott, (Sermons.) See Note II.

that of Christians in far less favoured quarters of the globe. It is related in a work, published some years since by the Rev. William Ellis, formerly missionary to the islands in the Pacific, that the ship reaching Tahiti on the Sabbath, no canoe put off, no native was seen on the beach, no smoke in any part of the district, and they (on board) began to apprehend that the population had been swept off by some disease, or that they had all gone to battle; when their fears were removed by one of the party, who had been there before, observing that it was the Sabbath, and that on that day, the natives did not launch their canoes, or light their fires. A similar testimony is borne by another interesting writer, the Rev. Mr. Stewart, of America; who, on arriving at one of the Sandwich Islands on the Sabbath, found the whole population assembled in their place of worship.¹ We insist not on the circumstance of their not lighting fires; for allowance must be made for difference of climate; but surely, when we observe the beautifully strict and proper manner in which the natives of those distant isles, visited so recently with the day-spring from on high, sanctified the Sabbath, we may well anticipate, that they will rise up in judgment against multitudes in these *our* privileged islands, and condemn them.

3. We may notice, as another glaring sin of the day, **DRUNKENNESS**. To a reflecting mind it is perfectly distressing to witness the numbers, who,

¹ See Mr. Stewart's Journal.

in a nominally Christian land, are led unresistingly along, the shackled slaves of this degrading vice. Intemperance marches over the kingdom, like some infernal fiend, destroying all before him, and respecting neither sex nor age. Though the Temperance Society has materially maimed this monster, and rescued many a poor soul from his fearful grasp, yet his powers of destruction are still tremendous; insomuch that scarcely a day passes, in which one may not hear of some new victim becoming his prey. "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Of the awful extent to which intemperance prevails, some idea may be formed from the following uncontradicted statement of a member of the House of Commons, the session before last. Summing up a most startling and important calculation, he observes—"It may be, therefore, asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the aggregate expenses entailed, and losses sustained, by the pernicious habits of drinking, exceed one hundred millions annually; that in a mere pecuniary and economical sense, it is the greatest blight that ever cursed our country; and, like the canker-worm it is eating out its very vitals."¹

Oh, what guilt the kingdom has to answer for, in the encouragement afforded to the sale of ardent spirits! thus feeding the national exchequer at the

¹ Note III.

tremendous cost of the national morality. Surely this is the Juggernaut of Britain.

How still more applicable to our times, than to his own, are those lines of the Christian poet :

Pass when we may, through city or through town,
Village or hamlet, of this merry land,
Though lean and beggar'd, every twentieth pace
Conducts the unguarded nose to such a whiff
Of stale debauch forth issuing from the styes
That law has licensed, as makes temperance reel.
There sit, involved and lost in curling clouds
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
The lackey, and the groom ; the craftman there
Takes a Lethæan leave of all his toil.—
Dire is the frequent curse, and its twin sound
The cheek-distending oath, not to be praised
As ornamental, musical, polite
Like those, which modern senators employ,
Whose oath is rhetoric, and who swear for fame !
Behold the schools, in which plebeian minds,
Once simple, are initiated in arts,
Which some may practice with politer grace,
But none with readier skill ! 'tis here they learn
The road that leads from competence and peace
To indigence and rapine, 'till at last
Society, grown weary of the load,
Shakes her encumbered lap, and casts them out.
But censure profits little : vain the attempt
To advertise in verse a public pest
That like the filth, with which the peasant feeds
His hungry acres, stinks and is of use.
The excise is fattened with the rich result
Of all this riot, and ten thousand caasks,
For ever dribbling out their base contents,
Touch'd by the Midas finger of the state,
Bleed gold for ministers to sport away.
Drink and be mad then ; 'tis your country bids !
Gloriously drunk, obey the important call !
Her cause demands the assistance of your throats.
Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more.'¹

¹ The Task, Book IV.

4. Immediately in the train of inebriation may be mentioned its usual attendants,—**SWEARING, LYING AND FORNICATION.** In whatever direction we turn throughout the land, what profane, what blasphemous expressions astound the ear ! This sin has of late, indeed, been almost wholly renounced by the higher classes, on the mere ground of its being indecorous and vulgar ; but it still prevails to a shocking extent among the inferior orders of society.

Then as to lying, how deplorable is its prevalence. The unrenewed heart is a forge of falsehoods, and out of its abundance the mouth emits them on the slightest inducement. “ The wicked are estranged from the womb : they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.” How heinous also is the *perjury* practised at elections, and in the courts of justice : not to speak of still higher assemblies ! Fornication—This vice, which one is ashamed even to mention, is notoriously and unblushingly prevalent. Witness the prostitution that parades and pollutes the streets of our cities, towns, and villages. They declare their sin as Sodom. Nay, in some places, unchastity has even ceased to be considered a sin, at least, it is palliated by the lenient appellation of a ‘ misfortune ! ’ Such is the deceitfulness and hardening tendency of sin, and so true is the statement of Scripture,¹ that ‘ whoredom takes away the heart,’—that is, stupi-

¹ Hosea iv. 11.

fies the conscience. But God is not mocked, who declares, that 'no fornicator, nor unclean person, hath any inheritance in his kingdom.'

5. We may specify as the climax of this accumulation of sins, practised throughout the land, INFIDELITY.¹ This is the dead sea into which all these rivers of impurity naturally tend. For, when a person has, by long habits of transgression, run a deep account in the book of doom, it then becomes his interest that the Bible should be untrue; and what he wishes *were* the case, he very easily is persuaded *may* be. Hence, he hunts about for arguments to support him in his depraved inclination: consults diabolical books; strives to exclude from his mind every struggling ray of truth: and then, of course, the deceiver is not slack in coming to his aid with plausible speculations, and perverse arguments,—'making the worse appear the better reason.' All this while, the foundations of principle are gradually undermined, and the good Spirit of the Lord is grieved; (for he will not always strive with man;) and the heart is passing through an indurating process; and because the individual liked not to retain God in his knowledge, nor had pleasure in the truth, but in unrighteousness, therefore he is most justly sent a strong delusion, that he should believe a lie; delivered over to a reprobate mind; to judicial

¹ 'It is a dark and portentous spot in our sky that the progress of knowledge should be accompanied with so much infidelity and irreligion.'—Dr. M'Crie.

blindness and impenitence; and the horrible consummation is—"the fool hath said in his heart there is no God."¹—Thus, 'they commence with profligacy, they proceed to scepticism, and they end in infidelity.'²

The symptoms of this spreading leprosy are numerous:—For instance, the spurious liberalism and indifference to the truth, already noticed, the general war-cry raised against the ecclesiastical establishments, and which, it is remarkable was not raised, until those establishments experienced a religious revival; the running fire maintained against true religion in the innumerable newspapers, pamphlets, books, and magazines, which are daily issuing from the press, impregnated with a constantly increasing virulence, and circulated with an indefatigable industry, the ridicule of any recognition of the Deity in the legislative assembly. In brief, the duelling, sabbath-breaking, neglect of divine ordinances, and other manifestations of con-

¹ 'The remarkable fact appears to be, that the chief source of unbelief on the greatest of all subjects, is generally to be found in a previous moral corruption of mind. It arises from no defect of evidence, but from a state of mind on which the highest falls without power. This striking moral process begins by a man renouncing the guidance of sound moral principle, and the restraints of religious truth, both on his conduct and on the discipline of his heart. The great truths which he thus violates are then repelled as intruders, which disturb his mental tranquillity—and, from this stage in his downward progress, the career is short, and the mental process simple, by which he succeeds in driving the belief of them from his own mind. Such is the wondrous economy of the human heart, and such is the history of many a man who, after a certain course of moral degradation, has sought refuge in infidelity.—Dr. ASHCROMBIE.

² Bishop Porteus.

tempt for the authority of Scripture, and the awards of eternity, which are continually exhibited—what are all these but practical incredulity ?¹

There is an immense mass too of vague heterogeneous opinion upon sacred things, lying like a dead weight upon the popular mind ; composed of false philosophy, socinianism, scepticism, popery, and other cognate modifications of error and irreligion ; a mass, ready at the slightest impulse to move forward from its loose resting-place, and precipitate itself into the abyss of open unbelief. Nor is this state of things peculiar to our own country. ‘ Some of those best qualified to judge, have given us fearful pictures of the nature and extent of absolute infidelity among the priesthood of Spain. The neology of Germany and Switzerland is but scepticism and infidelity in disguise.’ And in America, if reports be true, infidelity has been for some time propagated by agents paid expressly for the purpose ; is infused through the population by its appropriate journals ; yea, has even its own temples, in which it is publickly preached to congregations of approving thousands. In France, the

¹ ‘ We see not lawless authority laying violent hands on our rights and privileges, and property. We see not the arm of spiritual despotism attempting to enthral us in its bondage. But we see what, to the attached disciple of Christ, and the lover of his cause in this land, is equally, if not more to be deplored—we see the spirit of daring blasphemy, and the spirit of bold infidelity, and the spirit of impious fanaticism, and the spirit of damnable heresy, and the spirit of open disregard to God’s word, and ordinances, and Sabbath, pervading and increasing in the land.’—Dr. MACFARLANE. It is credibly asserted, that several congregations of professed infidels regularly assemble in London.

sale of the anti-scriptural writings of Voltaire and Rousseau is said to be amazing : and indeed it is reasonably to be anticipated, that, according as the light of intelligence expands, and penetrates the thick darkness of papal communities, those individuals who are unacquainted with any true form of Christianity, perceiving the palpable absurdity of Romanism,¹ will renounce Christianity altogether, and rush at once into positive deism, or something still worse. That this is the natural and direct tendency of Romanism has been evinced to a very considerable extent on the continent, and, there is reason to apprehend, in Ireland also.

The writer professes not a profound acquaintance with prophecy ; but several passages, both of the Old and New Testaments, would lead us to expect in these last days, a more than ordinary defection from the faith.² And certainly, when we consider existing appearances, there seems but too much reason to prognosticate, that this awful, this terrific period is drawing very near indeed to its commencement.

All these evils are in a great measure attributable to the grievous unfaithfulness of the churches in these kingdoms for a long period, terminating about forty years since. Britain was once the glory of all lands ; prosperous at home, and respected abroad :

¹ 'The lowest superstition and the most daring scepticism, frequently pass into each other.'—Dr. JOHN ABERCROMBIE.

² See Daniel xii. 1. Mark xiii. 19, 20. Luke xviii. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. Rev. iii. 10. xii. 12.

but 'pure religion and undefiled' was then *her* glory. Her prelates, as Cranmer and Hooper, and Latimer, and Jewell, and Hall and Beveridge, were apostolic. Her pastors, as Bradford, and Gilpin, and Baxter, and Herbert, and Henry, were clothed with righteousness, pastors after God's own heart, that fed the people. Then were the palmy days of the Church of England. Then was it well with us. But alas! it is the tendency of all things sublunary to degenerate. The fatal Act of Uniformity was passed, which drove from the pale of the English establishment such a goodly company of ministers, as occasioned her a loss of vitality, from which she is only now beginning to recover. Presently an ominous cloud came over her—chilling her devotional fervour, and obscuring her doctrinal brightness. Then succeeded a darkness that was felt. The priest's lips kept knowledge no longer. The law perished from the learned, and counsel from the prudent. The shepherds, indeed, eat the fat, and clothed themselves with the wool, but they fed not their flocks; so that they were scattered, and became meat to all the beasts of the field. They wandered through all the mountains, and none did search or seek after them.

The clergy, in place of being ensamples to the people in whatsoever things were pure, lovely, and of good report, were their leaders in all that was vicious and scandalous. They forsook the study of the Scriptures for the study of the world; the chamber of the sick for the scene of dissipation.

'They had become dumb dogs that could not bark. They had forsaken the word of the LORD, and what wisdom was in them ?

The truth being no longer clearly and constantly proclaimed from the pulpit, faith which cometh and is nourished by hearing, gradually declined. The people were destroyed for lack of knowledge. There was 'like people, like priest.' The worship of God in spirit and in truth was superseded by a cold and heartless formality; and nominal protestantism became little better than real popery. People rested in the 'opus operatum,' the mere act and letter of observances; and relied on their own doings, instead of the merits of the Mediator, to obtain them justification. During this 'dark age' of the English church, the sun of Christianity not only did not remain stationary in her hemisphere, it absolutely retrograded many degrees: so that of her it might, in a spiritual sense, be lamented, in the pathetic language of inspiration, "Her Nazarites *were* purer than snow; they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies; their polishing was of sapphire. Their visage *is* blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become as a stick."¹

Could these dry bones live? yes; all things are possible with GOD. His Spirit came from the four

¹ Note IV.

winds, and breathed upon these slain, so that they revived and stood up, an exceeding great army. All the three national churches awoke as in the ancient days, and put on their beautiful garments. The glory of the Lord was risen upon them; and they presently shone as cities set upon hills, reflecting a moral lustre around the lands. But alas! the consequences of long neglect are not remedied speedily, nor the guilt of it soon forgotten by the Almighty. While the husbandman slept, the enemy sowed tares in the field; which have sprung up in such a noxious crop of vices, as will only be exterminated by the Spirit of judgment and of burning. A storm has been raised in the just anger of the LORD, that will not easily be allayed. His heritage is become unto him as a speckled bird; the birds round about her are against her. 'Syria is confederate with Ephraim in the war against Jerusalem.' Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers worshipped, they seek not to repair, but to demolish.

Its very existence they call its crime; they cry, "Down with it, down with it, even to the ground!" They break down its carved work with axes and hammers. That venerable religious establishment, which has been the main pillar and ground of the truth in these realms, which we may term, indeed, the very spinal bone of the empire, they are proceeding to destroy, thereby endangering the whole body politic through which it is extended. Her bishoprics have been abolished,

her ministers murdered, and herself loaded with the whole vocabulary of abuse.¹

And O! tell it not in Gath! those who call themselves Christian ministers, those who represent the Baxters, and the Flavels, and the Owens of other times, men who were the most uncompromising enemies of error and ungodliness—men who were cherubim in spirituality; even their representatives, with few exceptions, have united in an impious league with papists and infidels, for the overthrow of *that* church, which, whatever be her defects in external management, (and who will deny that she *has* these?) is yet intrinsically true and scriptural, and has been lately acknowledged of GOD by an augmented outpouring of his very best gift, and token of favour, even his own Holy Spirit! Is not this for a lamentation? Is it not another grievous iniquity? ²

Thus far I have noticed some of our more flagrant and common offences. I have not specified those of a more rare and atrocious character, such as robbery, and rapine, and blood-shedding, and nightly maraudings, and house-burnings. These, however, be it remembered, are all equally naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Neither have I mentioned the dishonesty, and extortion, and corruption, which prevail in various departments of business; nor do I dwell on the exceeding '*pride*' of England, which

¹ Note V.

² Note VI.

testifies to her face : how she has vainly vaunted herself in her maritime position ; in her internal resources ; in the vastness of her foreign possessions ; in the invincibleness of her fleets and armies : how, in the height of her prosperity and haughtiness of heart, she hath said, ‘ I shall be a lady for ever : I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow.’ Neither do I expatiate on the criminality of Britain in her doings in the east,—rapaciously dispossessing the native princes of their hereditary properties,¹ and encouraging, from motives of avarice, the cruel and obscene abominations at Juggernaut and other similar seats of Satan : and altogether making Christianity to be so abhorred by the people of India, from the scandalous lives of its professors, that a Christian had come to signify with them a person without a religion ! I dwell not on these and other topics that might be insisted on. I close the dismal enumeration with stating—

¹ It is consolatory to reflect, that of late years some reparation has been made in a *spiritual* way, and considerable improvement taken place in the conduct of our countrymen in the east.

‘ Our sword has swept o’er India ; there remains
 A nobler conquest far,
 The mind’s ethereal war,
 That but subdues to civilize its plains.
 Let us pay back the past, the debt we owe,
 Let us around dispense
 Light, hope, intelligence,
 Till blessings track our steps where’er we go.
 O England, thine be the deliverer’s meed,
 Be thy great empire known
 By hearts made all thine own,
 By thy free laws and thy immortal creed.’

L. E. L.

Lastly, our IMPENITENCE. The Lord saw fit to visit us with pestilence. Now, though that judgment was general over the earth, yet it was a loud call to us in particular, to repent and turn to GOD : for when his judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world should learn righteousness. But *did* we so improve the visitation ? Did we repent and break off our sins by righteousness ? True, after much delay and opposition, a day of public fasting and humiliation was at length appointed, and observed with much apparent propriety and seriousness of devotion. Several cases of real conversion also occurred, and there was a general increased attention to religious ordinances, during the plague's continuance. But did we repent and reform permanently and nationally ? I think it must be manifest, from the foregoing catalogue of iniquities, that we did not : but that we have acted too much like the Israelites of old, " When he slew them, then they sought him ; and they returned and inquired early after God : and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues ; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

What may we apprehend will be the consequence of such obduracy and perfidy ? Either, that " the clouds will return after the rain," and pour upon us some heavier calamity, as was experienced by impenitent Egypt in the days of Pha-

raoh : or else, that the highest will "let us alone," till we have filled up the measure of our offences, and wrath come upon us to the uttermost. "Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee." ¹

¹ Ezekiel xxiv. 13.

LECTURE II.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

“ But can ye not discern the signs of the times ? ”—**MATT. XVI. 3.**

By this expression I would be understood to mean such features or characteristics of the age, as may lead to the expectation that certain appropriate consequences, attached to them in the inspired record, are likely to follow : just as we augur the approach of summer, or of winter, from their usual precursors. I confine myself to such as belong more peculiarly to our own nation.

Some of these signs have been indicated already, in stating the prominent *sins* of the times ; for those sins are themselves signs : as, for instance, liberalism, infidelity, and impenitency. These, we must admit, are symptoms of a state of things by no means healthy. We shall adduce some others of a similar kind, reserving for the sequel the mention of such as are more auspicious ; for such, (the Lord be blessed,) there unquestionably are.

1. First, then, let us notice the **LUXURY** of the age. We are a self-indulgent generation, “ whose god is our belly.” I speak, of course, of the generality. The days in which we live, are ‘ days of

soft and silken professorship.’¹ Far am I from decrying cleanliness and comfort, or even a pure and simple elegance. Nay, I desire to see my poorer brethren, in Ireland especially, advanced in the scale of civilization in this respect. What I denounce is, ‘the excess of riot, the superfluity of naughtiness;’ the extreme fastidious refinement of the age. We have arrived at a height of extravagance in dress, furniture, and the appointments of the table, of which our plainer, but more vigorous ancestors never dreamed. Some expend on a single entertainment, a larger sum than would provide a comfortable meal for a thousand families, or than would maintain a missionary on his field of usefulness for a whole twelve-month ! In our cities especially, the luxury and voluptuousness of the wealthy surpass all parallel in these countries. “The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” there reign unrivalled. Indeed, every where we may actually trace the effects of increasing wealth and luxury, in banishing one by one the habits, and new-modelling the phraseology of stricter times, and in diffusing throughout the middle ranks those relaxed morals and dissipated manners, which were formerly confined to the higher classes of society.² This is a bad sign of the times. This bloated appearance on the surface, indicates that the system is internally unsound. Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, were the ruin

¹ Dr. Chalmers.

² Mr. Wilberforce.

of Sodom ;¹ and never were ancient Nineveh, or Babylon, or Rome so conspicuous for every thing that pandered to effeminacy and animal indulgence, as when they were nearest their downfall. “ And in that day did the Lord GOD of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth : and behold joy and gladness, slaying of oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine : let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.” ²

2. Another portentous speck on our sky is THE UNPRINCIPLED CONDUCT OF PUBLIC MEN. Many, who from their education and position in society, and from their stake in the country, should be expected, even from a regard to their own interests, to follow peace themselves and promote it among others, seem, on the contrary, like the peterel, to find pleasure only in the storm. Taking on their lips the sacred name of patriotism, they are in reality their country's deadliest foes ; being enemies of that righteousness whereby alone a nation is exalted. Shutting their eyes to all history, and their ears to all expostulation, they will listen to nothing but their own voices, and the voices of those who join with them in the same factious and insensate cry. Instead of pouring oil into their

¹ Ezekiel xvi. 49.

² Isaiah xxii. 12—14.

country's bleeding wounds, they add fuel to the inflammable materials which threaten her combustion.

Instead of being the guides and beacons of the people, to point them the course of rectitude and safety, they are the fatal maelstroms in the sea of agitation, that draw within their vortex all the loose and worthless weeds, that fluctuate on the surface of society. O! how is the country cursed by Catalines! O, how are the good sense and good feeling of the community outraged! "The leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed."

Abetted by a base and immoral press, which wafts their assertions over the world, as on the wings of ten thousand demons, they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth! They "speak oppression and revolt; conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood." They say, 'Our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?' Even when they inculcate peace, it is after the manner of dissemblers. Their words are smoother than oil, having war in their hearts. "Frowardness is in their hearts: they devise mischief continually; they sow discord. Therefore shall their calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall they be broken without remedy."¹

Turn we now to the senate-house,—the grand

¹ Prov. vi. 14, 15.

council-chamber of the empire : that place, where we should expect to be instructed and delighted by the concentrated wisdom of the nation ; that place which should be the sacred seat of gravity and order : O ! what an arena does it present of strife and violence ! what a boiling crater of fierce and ungovernable passions ! The most gross mis-statements, the most rude personalities, the most puerile misconduct disgrace the assembly. Reason and sound sense are of no avail. Though one spake with the tongues of men and angels, he would but beat the air. The majority appear to come, determined to vote, not according to the real merits of the question before them, but according to their own selfish views. With the exception of a few noble and gifted spirits, who fear not to stand up in the midst of their fellows, ' faithful among the faithless,' and to witness for the truth and for the Lord ; pique, and ambition, and party-spirit, and private interest, appear to actuate the national representatives. The interests of the nation are sacrificed at the shrine of selfishness. ' They all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.'

And when any measure, immediately connected with religion and the empire's genuine welfare, is ventured to be introduced, with what indecent levity, with what unblushing ridicule, with what audacious scoffing, is the solemn subject treated ! As if the recognition of a Supreme Being, and regard to his authority, were altogether antiquated

things ; unworthy of the present advanced progress of mental improvement ! Thus, they who meet to make laws for man, themselves condemn the laws of God ; and the seat of the senator is become “ the seat of the scornful.”

O for the ancient days !—the days of Chatham, or of Burke, or of Percival, or of Wilberforce : when religion was yet honoured, and reason, and truth, and eloquence, and the intrinsic strength of the cause bore off the victory ;—but now, our silver is become dross : what was our glory is rendered our disgrace ; “ for, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts doth take away from us the mighty man, and the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the eloquent orator ; and babes rule over us.”

3. The next feature of the times I shall mention is—DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS. This is one of the signs of the last “ perilous times,” specified by the Holy Spirit.¹ The commandment, “ Honour thy father and thy mother,” the first commandment with promise, is now nearly as much forgotten as if it had been recalled ; and the example of Christ himself, who, though the Lord of glory, was yet subject to his human parents, is nearly as much neglected, as if it had never been left us to follow. Parental discipline is relaxed. The young are froward from the womb, and prematurely allowed to be their own masters. The veriest

¹ 2 Tim. iii.

striplings esteem themselves wiser than their fathers and mothers, by many degrees ; such is their overweening conceit of ' the march of intellect.'

Children, not habituated to " bear the yoke in youth," never will endure it afterwards. From being disobedient to their natural superiors, they learn disrespect towards all,—pastors, masters, magistrates. They prove disloyal subjects ; " despise dominion ;" yea, that of the king of kings himself. They neither fear God, nor regard man. They kick against all control, human and divine. " Presumptuous are they, self-willed ; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." And thus it comes to pass, that *families*, which ought to be the nurseries of the church, where children should be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, become in point of fact the seed-plots of rebellion, where subjects are nurtured for the prince of darkness, and whence contumacy and insubordination are propagated over the empire.

Persons, whose early culture is thus neglected, generally prove the most bitter plagues of society ; worse than downright pagans themselves. For the latter are under *some* restraint—they own a religion, false though it be. Whereas these acknowledge no authority whatever. They " have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds."

And this leads me to notice,

4. THE SPIRIT OF EQUALITY now so rife : the growing want of respect manifested by the common people towards those, who, by their rank, educa-

tion, and position in life, are plainly and undeniably their superiors. Scripture, justice, and the fitness of things unite in enjoining us to render unto all their dues,—“tribute to whom tribute is due; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” But such are the pride and insolence of the age, that the man of low degree appears to grudge his better the slightest token of respect. “The child behaves himself proudly against the ancient; and the base against the honourable.” “They that are younger than we bear us in derision, whose fathers we would have disdained to set with the dogs of our flock.”

The Former of all things evidently intended that there should be a variety of ranks; for he gives a variety of endowments. In his word also, he denounces those who “speak evil of dignities.” Indeed, his will in this particular is clearly evinced in the universal constitution of things. First, we find a disparity in external nature: in the plants of the garden, in the flowers of the field; in the height of the trees and mountains? If these were all equal in size, where would be the beauty of the natural world? Enchantment would give place to a bleak monotony. Again, are all the beasts of the earth, all the inhabitants of the deep, or all the tribes of the air respectively, of one form and power? We know the very contrary to be the case. And if we elevate our eyes to the spangled doom of night, does not one star differ from another star in glory? Again; are there not diversities of

orders in God's church? "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers;"¹ "helps, governments."² Once more, ascending still higher in the scale of being, we find a variety of ranks in the celestial kingdom itself. We read of angels, and the archangel, of cherubim, and seraphim, of thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.³ Thus we find diversity in all departments of creation. It is, in fact, a great house, wherein are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour. And who can question, that this inequality tends at once to develope and illustrate the manifold wisdom of God,⁴ and to promote the general welfare of his creatures. The universe is a harp of innumerable strings; but were these all of one unvaried length and thickness, where would be the harmony?

'Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark, what discord follows! Each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
And make a sop of all this solid globe,
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike the father dead;
Force would be right, or rather right be wrong,

¹ Eph. iv. 11.

² 1 Cor. xii. 28.

³ Col. i. 16.

⁴ It is related of the celebrated Hooker, that while he was on his death-bed, the doctor found him one morning in deep contemplation, and on inquiring his thoughts, was answered,—'that he was meditating the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which, peace could not be in heaven; and oh! that it might be so on earth!'—Life by Walton.

(Between whose endless jar justice resides.)
 Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
 Then every thing includes itself in power,
 Power into will, will into appetite;
 And appetite, an universal wolf;
 So doubly seconded with will and power,
 Must make perforce an universal prey,
 And, last, eat up himself.' ¹

Thus, 'the world by difference is in order found.'
 Equality never has been, or could be. Supposing there was a general equality to-morrow, it could not continue. Those individuals who are possessed of superior ability, industry, and principle, would of necessity ere long obtain a pre-eminence. As in the human body, some members are more strong and comely and honourable than others, yet all are indispensable to the general beauty and utility of the frame; so it is with the body of the state.

Accordingly, we find a difference of grade and condition in all ages and countries of the world. It is the universal arrangement. ²

That such an arrangement existed from the beginning appears from the word of GOD. We read, in the book of Genesis, of kings, dukes, and lords. ³ Evidently therefore the BIBLE is no leveller.

The spirit we have mentioned, however, is directly opposed to this constitution of things. Vain man would be wiser than GOD: would alter what was evidently the divine appointment. Many,

¹ SHAKESPEARE—'Troilus and Cressida.'

² The maxim is coeval with HOMER—'Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοῖραν.''

³ Chap. XIV. XXIII. XXXVI.

in these times, would, if not absolutely subvert the social edifice, (and some would do even this,) at least annihilate all differences in condition, and reduce mankind to a common standard. This is the aim of our malcontents and radicals. And thus, like the accumulating sands of Lybia, gradually overtopping the venerable grandeurs of ancient Egyptian architecture, the lower level of society is daily rising around the higher, and threatening to submerge all in one drear desert. The seeds of sedition and revolt have been widely and deeply sown: the leaven of democracy and anarchy has long been fermenting: and there is accordingly a mighty mass of mind, more dreadful and uncontrollable than the raging ocean, now in a state of strong excitement, and ready to burst forth and bear before it our most valuable institutions, and the mounds of all social and civil order.

For proof of this, we appeal to the growing insolence of the lower classes, already noticed; to the disloyal, yea, treasonable spirit which animates so many of the public journals and orations of the day: to the ripeness for insurrection indicated so often in Great Britain: and to the undeniable fact, of the arming and organization of the Roman Catholic peasantry of Ireland.¹

Nay, the same spirit is disturbing the whole

¹ "I do not exaggerate in the least—we are on the verge of a volcano—nothing can preserve the country from a dreadful explosion but the continuance in office of his Majesty's present advisers."—From Mr. O'Connell's Letter to the Reformers of Ireland, dated 4th Dec. 1835.

earth. The body politic is diseased. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. Restless and uneasy, the world tosses to and fro, like a fever-patient upon his death-bed. 'The earth is moved exceedingly.' The nations heave, as with the throes of a moral earthquake. 'Overturn, overturn, overturn,' is the common cry; and the rampant spirit of revolution is only kept down by the omnipotent hand of Jehovah, and the sword of magistracy. We tread on the verge of a labouring 'volcano;' we hear the subterraneous winds and gases rumbling beneath our feet, and struggling for a vent: the vessel of our invaluable constitution wheels in the circles of a whirlpool; and whether she will go down or be rescued from the gulph, is a problem of painful uncertainty, and most difficult solution.

5. Accordingly, as another sign of the times, there is a general and very natural impression of our being on the eve of extraordinary events. We live in an age of wonders; and now, persons reasonably inquire, 'What shall be the end of these things?' A vague, undefined expectation of some approaching catastrophe, generally, we do not say universally, prevails; attended by an unprecedented attention to Prophecy. Neglect in this department of study has given place to research; aversion, to the most intense interest. Whence is this? Doubtless from Him, who sways with absolute power, the realm of mind. He so ordained, that, as the predicted occurrences drew nigh, greater attention

should be drawn to the prophecies respecting them. Previously, this might have been accompanied by evil consequences. Accordingly, "the vision was shut up, and the words were sealed till the time of the end." Now, however, the more thinking are all on the watch-tower of observation. The church stands on tip-toe; looking with outstretched neck, and strained eye, for some great arrival, as occurred in the east, before the advent of the Saviour. These then are all portentous signs of the times.

6. But perhaps as remarkable a portent as any is—THE AMAZING SPREAD OF POPERY. The reformation inflicted on the beast its first deadly wound; and another was inflicted at the French Revolution. After that period it appeared for a time so stunned and crest-fallen, that, a few years since, it was generally deemed to be declining to a rapid death. Latterly, however, in a manner wholly mysterious, its deadly wounds seem to have been healed, and it has risen to such an altitude, and assumed such an imposing front, and so bold and imperious a tone, that 'all the world (indeed) wonders after the beast.'

What numerous and gorgeous edifices is the Church of Rome every where erecting. In the year 1814 there were in all England only forty-four mass-houses; in 1830 the number was stated to be 497, and it has since been increasing with a still greater progression. For illustration of this the reader is referred to the Appendix.¹ That popery

¹ Note VII.

is on the increase is matter of fact—matter of ocular demonstration.

It may not be amiss that we investigate a little the circumstances that have contributed to help forward in these countries the ‘mystery of iniquity’ in this its last and most desperate struggle for the supremacy.

1. The first impulse latterly given to it was undoubtedly *the Act of Emancipation*. That act was to have been a balm to all political wounds ; a healer of all heart-aches ; a general moral panacea. So the Romanists and many Protestants affirmed. Well—the country was cajoled ; the bill passed the imperial legislature, and received the royal assent. But what has been the result ? Did the Romanists keep their promises ? Have they evinced gratitude to their benefactors ? Have they ceased to make further encroachments ? The very reverse of all this has occurred. ‘As if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on,’ they have become more hostile in their feelings, more overbearing in their deportment, and more exorbitant in their exactions, than ever. And to what enormous heights they ultimately aspire, let the known genius and history of popery suggest. So strictly has Rome adhered to her dogma, that ‘no faith is to be kept with heretics.’

May that emancipation not enslave the kingdom ! May its announcement not ultimately prove the death-knell of the united empire ! But alas ! from that momentous epoch—wo worth the day !

she appears to have been descending a declivity of ruin with accelerated rapidity. Commercial and agricultural distress, pestilence, internal dissention, excited to the boiling point, and only not breaking over in actual revolution and blood-shed; weakness in our national councils, and want of public confidence, paralyzing improvement, generally speaking, compose the annals of the interval.

2. Another circumstance that has greatly contributed to the spread of the same system, is *the intermarriage of Papists with Protestants*. This, the priests have by all means promoted; and the almost invariable consequence is, the acquisition of the Protestant to their party.

3. Another circumstance is, the *liberalism and unfaithfulness*—(I had almost said *perfidy*) of *professing Protestants*. The parliament, though swearing that the sacrifice of the mass is blasphemous and idolatrous, has yet had the awful hardihood to allot, yearly, large sums of the public money to the maintenance of Papal schools and colleges, those nurseries of bigotry and spiritual despotism,¹ while it has withdrawn the grants formerly conceded to the association for discountenancing vice, the Kildare-place Society, and that for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Individual Protestants also have not been ashamed to assist at the founding of Popish chapels and cathedrals, and to sanction by their presence

¹ Vide 'An Impartial View of Maynooth College.' By EUGENE FRANCIS O'BEIRNE, late Student.

the absurd ceremonies of that anti-scriptural worship. O ! that pernicious liberalism ! Only for it, the beast could never again have erected its horrid horn as it has done.

Such, too, is the weak simplicity, the disgraceful *ignorance*, of numbers nominally Protestant, as to the grounds of the controversy between Rome and us, that, not being able to "give a reason of the hope that is in them," they are prepared to embrace Popery on the slightest temptation. They would not encounter any peril by refusing. They are ignorant of the truly atrocious character of that religion : they are ignorant of the massacres of the Waldenses and Albigenses ; or they forget these things. They forget the slaughter of the Huguenots in France on the day of St. Bartholomew ; and of the Protestants in Ireland, in 1641,¹ two of the most horrifying episodes in all history. They forget the butcheries of the Inquisition, in Europe, Asia, and America. They forget the fires of Smithfield and Oxford, the burning of the martyrs in various parts of England, during the reign of the bigotted Mary. They forget, in fine, that the Papal church is clearly and unequivocally denounced in Scripture, as the scarlet whore, THE MOTHER OF ABOMINATIONS, drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and accordingly devoted to irretrievable destruction.² What more is needful to prove the

¹ See HUME'S England, Charles I. chap. LV.

² Rev. xvii.

Papacy an emanation from "the bottomless pit," than just its uniformly cruel character?¹ Bishop Newton says with historical truth—"The heathen Emperor of Rome may have slain his thousands of innocent Christians, but the Christian Bishop of Rome hath slain his ten thousands."

But it is alleged that she is now changed, meliorated by the enlightenment of the age, and has renounced her ancient ferocious disposition. And truly, the practice of putting to death those who refuse adopting any religious creed, be it what it may, is so alien from reason, justice, humanity, and all propriety; in brief, so diabolical, that one might well suppose that at this advanced era of the human intellect, it would in point of fact be abandoned. But we have no warrant whatever, for thinking that it would be abandoned by the church under consideration. On the contrary, there is every reason to fear, that she retains all her old inclination to persecute, if once she had the power. And why do we affirm so? Because the extirpation of those she designates heretics, is a part and parcel of her system; one that has never been repealed; one that, on her own expressed principles, never *can* be repealed, seeing she maintains her *immutability*.² This, her sanguinary disposition, is clearly declared in the Bible; and woe be unto us, if we heed not its merciful intimations! It has been pretty plainly exhibited in the barbari-

¹ See Note VIII.

² Note IX.

ties committed in Portugal during the despotism of MIGUEL: barbarities, which, though outwardly perpetrated by him, were yet in reality in many instances originated by Popish ecclesiastics behind the screen, who availed themselves of him as their fitting instrument.¹

And if a single shadow of doubt remained upon the matter, it would have been annihilated by the recently-discovered work of Peter DENS; published by the approbation of the Romish Hierarchy, and directed to be used by every priest as his text-book and directory of conduct;—a work wherein all the ancient odious canons and decretals authorizing the breach of faith with heretics, and the putting of them to death, are revived and ratified. Thus is Popery changed, even as the rattlesnake when it changes its skin. It is the same execrable system that it ever was—the very virus of the old serpent, whose chief engine of opposition to the gospel it has been, whose master-piece of subtility and iniquity.²

But again. Protestants are found who affirm that there is hardly any *difference* between the religion of the Reformation and that referred to; and the present policy of Romanism is just to foster and confirm such misconceptions; its emissaries, with a deplorably perverted zeal, compassing sea and land to make one proselyte; insinuating themselves into families; “creeping into widows’

¹ See KEITH'S Signs of the Times, Vol. II. p. 250.

² Note X.

houses, leading captive silly women, laden with divers lusts," and "beguiling unstable souls" with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.

The tactics of the papal see have uniformly been, to accommodate herself to the prejudices of the people among whom she seeks a settlement. We may say of her, that "her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them."¹ Thus, in Japan, she assimilates with the prevailing Paganism. In India, her agent, Robert De Nobili, put on the garb of a Brahmin, to beguile the poor Hindoos. In England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, many Jesuits assumed the guise of Protestant ministers.² In France, Bossuet, in his day, pretended that the differences between them and the Protestants, were altogether trivial. A like game was formerly played in Ireland, until the heresy in question had acquired sufficient strength to enable it to unfurl its own flag. And similar is the policy pursued, we fear with too much success, to hood-wink and decoy the British people at this present moment.³

Hardly any difference between us and Rome! Why then protest? If there is not a very essen-

¹ Prov. v. 6.

² HALLAM's History.

³ Of this, the writer has himself seen a specimen. It is matter of notoriety, that in Ireland, the Second Commandment is omitted in the Roman Catholic Catechism; it so expressly repudiating image-worship; and the tenth divided into two, so as to complete the proper number. In England, however, such an omission would not have suited their present object, namely, the making the two religions appear nearly to correspond. Accordingly, a few years since, the author was shown at Cheltenham a Romish Catechism, wherein the Second Commandment was inserted.

tial difference indeed, our separation was a most indefensible *schism*. But, do we forget the article of transubstantiation, at once so repugnant to reason, to Scripture, to the testimony of our senses, and to the possibility of things? Do we forget the substitution of penance for the indispensable grace of repentance? Do we forget the sale of indulgences to sin, the enormity that led to the Reformation in Germany: or the distinction of sins into venial and mortal—the praying to departed tutelary saints—the masses for the dead—the soul-destroying figment of purgatory—their works of supererogation; while Scripture says, “there is none righteous; no not one;”¹ their exaltation of human merits in place of CHRIST’S; thus striking at the very foundation of the Christian faith; their making many mediators, instead of the One only Mediator between God and man, which is Christ Jesus: And, in fine, their giving more glory to the Virgin, than to her adorable Son.² Are *these* matters of insignificance? No; between the Church of Rome and every orthodox church, there is a difference as wide as between heaven and hell; between them there yawns a great gulph, and, that a ‘fixed’ gulph, eternal as Truth itself.³

¹ See Romans iii. 9—12, 23. ¹ John i. 8, 9, 10. ² Chron. vi. 36. Prov. ix. 9. James iii. 2.

³ Note XI.

³ ‘With the New Testament in our hands, it is no difficult task to disengage ourselves in succession from each one of the popish superstitions. Taking the words of Christ and his Apostles as our sole and sufficient authority, in belief and worship, we spurn without a doubt, this long train of popish absurdities.’—‘The modern Christian, Bible

It cannot be denied, that the Roman Catholic religion, taken *theoretically* and comprehensively, contains important truth ; for instance, the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement. *Practically*, however, these all-precious fundamentals are taken away. They are not held forth prominently to the people, but buried beneath a huge mountain of fooleries and abominations. In these, essentially and by distinction, *popery* consists : so that, that system is intrinsically mere heathenism ;¹ simply the old putrid carcase of heathenism, covered with the glittering mantle of a mock Christianity. It seems expressly devised with the view to subjugate the popular mind, and augment the power and opulence of the priesthood. To use the language of Bishop Coplestone, 'The policy of the Romish Church has been to keep the people in a blind subjection to the priesthood ; and as ignorance, and superstition, and imposing ceremonies, have always been the readiest means of accomplishing this purpose, so has that church not scrupled to employ them according to the power she possessed, till at length the religion of Christ has been made to resemble a political machine, or a heathen pageant, instead of being the guide of mens' lives, and the source of hope and holy comfort to their souls, through faith in the merits of their Redeemer.'

This system, therefore, cannot be amended. It in hand, throws off these follies and abominations, as a man would rend from his shoulders a fool's chequered coat, that had been forced upon him.'—SPIRITUAL DESPOTISM. Pp. 326, 327.

¹ See Note XII.

is that superstructure of wood, hay, and stubble which the Lord has doomed to utter perdition. 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.'¹ *Delenda est Roma.*

4. We have mentioned three circumstances, that have sadly promoted the advance of Romanism in these countries—namely, the act of emancipation, the intermarriage of protestants with Roman Catholics, and the liberalism and ignorance of professing protestants. We shall now notice a fourth circumstance, which is *Protestant Emigration*. In this the emigrants, generally speaking, are unquestionably much to be blamed. Instead of dwelling in the land, doing their duty to their country in her hour of danger, in hope of better times; they, in a spirit of impatient indignation, leave her shores; thereby weakening the hands of their brethren who remain, and strengthening those of their adversaries. They take a most momentous step, without consulting Providence, or indeed any thing but their own headlong inclinations. And thus, embarking on the great waters without a warrant from above, they are often visited with the severest calamities. 'For this cause many are weak, and many are sickly among them, and many sleep.' Some die on board the vessel; others are ship-wrecked and drowned; while multitudes more, arriving on the wished-for

¹ Rev. xviii. 8.

territory, find there but a lingering death, and foreign grave. They wander about in poverty and wretchedness; or are wounded in their work and become diseased; and when winter sets in, not being furnished with food and raiment sufficient to arm them against the intense rigours of the climate, miserably perish.

But theirs is not the *principal* fault. That lies on the heads of those, who, by their improper and unfeeling conduct, in a manner *compel* the others to expatriate themselves. And who are these? First, the demagogues, the political incendiaries, who, 'speaking oppression and revolt,' kindle the inflammable portion of the population into such outrageous acts of violence, as render the country almost uninhabitable by the orderly and peaceable. And, secondly, the *oppressive landlords*; who, neglecting their duty to their people, whom they should live with and befriend, in order to obtain a sufficiency of money to support them in their selfish indulgences, and unbounded extravagance, screw up their poor tenantry to such extremities of poverty and hardship, as at length snap the cord of endurance, and urge them to throw up their holdings in disgust. The vacated farms are forthwith rushed into by eager Romanists, who can live on little, and will brook what a protestant will not. And hence it is, that several thousands of our most valuable yeomanry, the very sinews and strength of the nation, have been induced to leave the country, carrying with them capital to a very

serious amount, while popery is pouring itself, like a flood, over districts once exclusively reformed, and threatening eventually to sweep the reformed religion out of the land.¹

O ! were we true to ourselves—were we one half as zealous in our *righteous* cause, as our enemies are in their evil, how different would be the state of affairs. But alas ! modern protestantism is suicidal. She puts a sword into an assassin's hand, with which to stab herself. Surely this system will ultimately recoil on such landlords' heads with merited retribution ?²

' Princes and lords may flourish or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath hath made ;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
If once destroyed, can never be supplied.'

5. But that cause, which unquestionably more than all others has always helped forward ' the mystery of iniquity,' is *the native corruption of the human heart*. "The carnal (or natural) mind is enmity against God." Spiritual religion is its absolute abhorrence. Hence, as this advances in the world, (for it is advancing,) the world is ' tormented ' by it, and account it an intruder, a marrer of its felicity. "They hate the light, because their deeds are evil." At the same time, man in a certain sense is naturally *religious*. Generally speaking, he must have a religion of some kind, as the whole history of the species evinces. Here,

¹ The above observations refer particularly to Ireland.

² See Amos viii. 4—8.

then, popery most opportunely comes to his aid, with a most accommodating compromise. Having a *form* of godliness, without the *power* under it, a person may retain the indulgence of every darling lust, yet quiet his conscience by attending on certain rites and ceremonies. Hence it is precisely suited to the popular taste. Not so gross as naked paganism, it does not offend the person of refinement; while at the same time, it is free from the *spirituality* which would still more offend his carnal nature. Besides, man is naturally indolent, particularly on religious subjects. He abhors the fatigue of thought and investigation. The Church of Rome, however, undertakes to exonerate from this, by empowering him to commit all to the priest; who, whatever may be the person's crimes, promises him, on certain, not very difficult, terms, a plenary absolution. What a downy couch for a sin-devoted soul to fall back upon!

Thus, from its aptitude to gratify the senses, flatter the pride, and accommodate the carelessness and sensuality of the natural heart, popery must ever remain a favourite with the unsanctified. They may be convinced of its erroneousness in their understandings, but they will still incline to it in their hearts.¹

¹ 'Popery,' according to Mr. Hall, 'in the ordinary state of its profession, combines the "form of godliness with a total denial of its power. A heap of unmeaning ceremonies, adapted to fascinate the imagination, and engage the senses; implicit faith in human authority, combined with an utter neglect of divine teaching—ignorance the most profound, joined to dogmatism the most presumptuous—a vigilant exclusion of biblical knowledge, together with a total

From the combined operation of all these causes then, the insidious serpent, bred on the banks of the Tiber, has glided over the continent to our shores; has twined itself round the body of the population from the feet upwards; has fastened its folds about the nation's neck, and hisses in the ears of the Sovereign himself.

But why such fears for the country from the resuscitation of this system? Because it is a system opposed to GOD, and contrary to man; an anti-social, anti-Christian system,¹ and consequently, wherever it comes, brings the Divine curse along with it. Wherever the seat of the beast is, there are the vials of vengeance poured forth.² I anticipate that this assertion will be condemned as uncharitable; and that there will be advanced in contradiction to it the fact, of many excellent Christians having lived and died within the pale of the Popish church. I rejoice that there have. We venerate the names of Pascal, and Fenelon, and Quesnel, and A'Kempis; we wish there were more of such. We pray, 'the LORD make them a thousand times more.' But such individuals, (we appeal to the scriptures and their own writings,) were Romanists only in name. They were Protestants in heart and principle: even as there may be Papists in heart and principle among us;—they were Christians, not through Popery,

extinction of free inquiry—present the spectacle of religion lying in state, surrounded with the silent pomp of death.'

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 4.

² Rev. xvi. 10.

but in spite of Popery; and, remaining in that pale, were “ saved so as by fire.”

It is a remarkable fact in history, that so often as the Romish heresy has prospered in this nation, the nation has suffered a proportionate adversity. This of itself might show us, that the heresy is an object of the Divine displeasure. Indeed, in whatever countries it prevails, a similar effect has been experienced. Its reign is a ‘ reign of terror.’ Under its mephitic influence, improvement stagnates, intellect is sickly; while indolence, and ignorance, and wretchedness predominate. ‘ The kingdom of the beast is full of darkness.’

For illustration of this, compare the Protestant states of Europe with the Papal states. Compare Holland with Italy; Prussia with Portugal; Sweden with Spain. Compare even the Protestant provinces of the same country with the Popish ones; and the same truth will be exemplified. For example, the northern states of America with the southern: Upper Canada with Lower; the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland with the Popish; or the north of Ireland with the south. In all these instances, the contrast is most remarkable. Industry, and cleanliness, and comfort, and general morality, and order, distinguish the former districts; the very opposite of these attributes, the latter. Popery is uniformly attended with wretchedness.

Were we to attempt her portrait, borrowing the pallet of inspiration, and a pencil dipped in heaven,

we would represent a proud imperious harlot, arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls : having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations. On her head are ten crowns, and on her forehead is written—**BLASPHEMY**. In her skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents. She sits upon a scarlet-coloured beast, having seven heads and ten horns,¹ and as she moves along, earth withers beneath its tread. The land is as the garden of Eden before her ; behind her a desolate wilderness. Her train are lamentation, mourning, and woe. The procession is brought up by a pale horse, and his name that sits on him is Death ; and hell follows with him.

Shall it then be wondered at, if we account the unquestionable revival of such a power the most appalling sign of the times ? What elevated our nation to her illustrious pre-eminence among the kingdoms ? What rendered her ‘ the first of the nations ? ’—the pearl, the flower, the pattern, and the glory of the whole earth ? Undoubtedly it was the Reformed Faith. Previously to the Reformation, in what respects was she superior to several other empires ? If then she relinquish her hold of that which ‘ exalted ’ and has supported her, as she appears hastening to do, the consequence is clear—her downfall is inevitable. Resting on the rock of Protestantism, the state has heretofore been beau-

¹ Rev. xvii. 1 ; xix. 2 ; xviii. 2 ; xiii. 1 ; xvii. 6 ; xviii. 24 ; xvii. 3.

tifully balanced between democracy on the one hand, and despotism on the other: and though, from time to time she has received many a menacing touch, causing her to vibrate and tremble, still has she remained poised upon her adamantine basis, the wonder of ages, and the admiration of the world. Let her, however, once renounce the pure religion, and that instant she sustains a shock which destroys her equilibrium, and then, where is the power that shall reinstate her on her original elevation?

But some deny that we have any cause for apprehension from Popery at present: To such we would only reply, Is it not the fact, that the agents of the Roman pontiff are making the most strenuous and unremitting exertions to re-establish his authority in these realms? Is it not the fact, that whole shoals of Jesuits, expelled from Spain and other continental nations, have taken refuge in this, and are working every engine to seduce the population from the right faith? Is it not the fact, that political circumstances are giving strength and power unto the Beast,¹ and that liberalism, and sectarianism, and infidelity are likewise aiding it? In fine, is it not the fact, that the mystic Babylon shall be destroyed only by the Spirit of the Lord and the judgments of his wrath, at the brightness of his coming?² Who then will persist in saying that we have no cause for alarm from the quarter in question? If in very deed we have no cause for

¹ Rev. xvii. 13.

² 2 Thess. ii. 8.

alarm, at the least we have cause for the most vigilant circumspection, and the adoption of every means calculated to resist and overcome the papal machinations.

‘Popery,’ says an eminent American, ‘is a system where science and ignorance, refinement and barbarism, wisdom and stupidity, taste and animalism, mistaken zeal and malignant enmity, may sanctimoniously pour out their virulence against the gospel, and cry, Hosanna, while they go forth to shed the blood, and wear out the patience of the saints. And though by revolutions it has been shaken, and compelled by motives of policy to cease a little from blood, not a principle of this system has been abandoned. All the wiles of ages past are put in requisition now, to heal the fatal wounds which the beast has received, and to render the system still more powerful and terrific. The leaven is in secret and in open operation in this country; (America) and the quick action of the beast to the touch of the spear, in Palestine, shows that he is neither dead nor asleep. And considering the civilization, and wealth, and science, which the system comprehends, it is from popery, no doubt, that the gospel is destined to experience the last and most determined resistance.’¹

We have enumerated some of the most obvious sins and signs of the times; and surely, on a review of the whole, we must admit, that they are emi-

¹ Dr. Beecher.

nently 'perilous times;' clearly reflected in that solemn prediction of the apostle: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God; having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The half of our sins have not been stated. So numerous are they, they cover the land like a plague of locusts. We are a nation laden with iniquity. Our transgressions are multiplied, and our sins testify against us. "And shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

It will be rejoined, that such have been the characteristics of every age; and that, after all, we are the best nation in the world. But, are we not also the worst, taking into consideration our incomparable advantages? God has not dealt with any nation as he hath with our's. He singled her out as the richest gem of his earthly crown; honouring her to be the nursery of the Reformation; the strong-hold of Protestantism; the metropolis of the moral world; whence the lights of science, and literature, and religion should radiate toward all quarters of the globe. What nation under heaven so favoured? Taking into account, then,

such signal and peculiar privileges and opportunities, can it be truly said, that our's is the best nation in the world? Rather, are not her spots darker than those of any other country, standing forth, as they do, from so luminous a ground? Surely, "if the mighty works which have been done in" us, "had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes."¹

It is true that the empire has often been in imminent danger, and as often have the hovering clouds passed away. But have we any assurance that such clemency will be extended to us always? Rather, have we not reason to apprehend, that punishment, the longer delayed, will only descend the heavier in the event, like rain after a protracted continuance of fair weather? Surely the aspect of the times would not lead us to suppose that the Lord's face was smiling on us. Our sky is darkened. 'The mirth of the land is gone.' England is 'merry England' no longer. A weight oppresses the public mind, analogous to that experienced by the body, previous to some great convulsion of nature. The moral climate is gross and unwholesome; nor can we well expect its purification, before the pouring out of a judgment. Doubtless, there are several sunny gleams breaking forth through 'the cloudy and dark day,' especially the increasing number and spirituality of the pious in

¹ Note XIII.

the land,—for except the LORD of Hosts had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been like unto Gomorrah. Yet this very circumstance constitutes another sign of the times, indicative of approaching storms. For the Lord is thus evidently “making up his jewels:” dividing the oil from the water, the light from the darkness, the wheat from the tares. The two great antagonist principles,¹ which have operated in the world from the beginning, are daily more strongly and vividly developed. The neutral ground is rapidly vacated, ‘The lines are drawing between Christ and the world.’ Either body is assuming a position more bold and decided. The godly are becoming more godly, and the wicked more wicked: like the two baskets of figs mentioned in Jeremiah, “the good figs very good, and the evil very evil.” This must be manifest to every attentive observer.

And what doth it argue? That the Almighty is thus separating his people from the great mass, “lest they be consumed in all its iniquities.” When the swallows begin to depart, we augur the approach of winter. Before the city of Sodom was overthrown, Lot and his family were hurried forth of it. Ere the slaying of the first-born in the land of Egypt, the houses of the Israelites were marked by the blood of the paschal lamb, and prior to Jerusalem’s being swept with the besom of destruction, all the Christians forsook it. Even so, when the holy seed are being severed from the

¹ ‘The flesh’ and ‘the spirit.’

world, some by disconformity, and others by death,¹ we may infer that the desolation thereof draweth nigh. When the salt is withdrawn from the lump, we may anticipate, that the latter will very soon perish in its own corruption.

Observe how the Lord is causing new edifices to be every where erected for the propagation of his gospel: how he is opening, in his providence, great and effectual doors for it, in districts formerly the most hopelessly inaccessible: how he is stirring up his ambassadors universally, to warn mankind of the coming wrath. Whence such unprecedented exertions, to promote by every means the knowledge of CHRIST, and the salvation of sinners? Could works so good be carried on, and the LORD not be their originator? No: "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things." He is sending his angels, or messengers, to gather his elect from the four winds; to pull them out of the fire; to lead them out from the city of destruction unto the Zoar of safety. And now, why are the plagues stayed? Why are the vials of vengeance not poured forth? Is it not even that the Lord waiteth to be gracious: waiteth till all the elect be gathered to the SAVIOUR? Yes; the angel of destruction can do nothing, till they be come thither?²

¹ 'Methuselah died the year before the flood; Augustine, a little before the sacking of Hippo; Parezus, just before the taking of Heidelberg; Luther, a little before the wars broke out in Germany.'—FLAVEL'S Spiritual Husbandry.

² Gen. xix. 22.

The four winds are held in, till the servants of God be sealed in their foreheads.¹

Other nations have had their rise and fall, and why may not our's? The present posture of affairs seems alarmingly indicative of such a catastrophe. Grey hairs are upon the nation, here and there. Vigour is leaving her. Her voice is no longer the lion's voice; nor her port the lion's port. Her name has greatly lost its former majesty and authority. It is a talisman no more. Foreigners see this "a kingdom divided against itself," and consequently weakened. The one only thing that can prevent ICHABOD being inscribed upon us is genuine religion. This might infuse youthful blood into Britain's aged veins: but alas! as a nation, we seem casting it off as fast as possible. Undoubtedly a considerable moral amendment has been going forward in this country for years past; but who have been its instruments? That very people "whom the nation abhorreth;" the people of the LORD. Look to the nation *as* a nation. Look to her in her public and representative capacity. Have we improved in this respect? Nay, we have grievously retrograded: encouraging false religion, and discouraging the true: treating with contempt every measure calculated to promote the divine glory. Instance the rejection, year after year, of any bill for the better observance of the sabbath. We have departed from the purity and simplicity that brightened the days of our fore-

¹ Rev. vii. 2, 3.

fathers, in the reign of Elizabeth. We have flung wide the gates of the constitution, to the firm adherents of a foreign potentate, allegiance to whom they consider their paramount duty.¹ Yea, some are for opening them wider still, so as to admit Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics of all descriptions. In a word, we have left our first love, and committed fornication with the ungodly nations of the continent. We have loved strangers, and after them we will go. We have grown enamoured of Gaul, and received into our bosom Delilahs, that have shorn our locks, and lopped our strength. We have, with eminent ingratitude to JEHOVAH, formed a close friendship with that nation, his enemy and ours, from whom he had graciously delivered us. Thus, virtue is going out of us; principle is going out of us; and it is well if the LORD be not leaving us likewise. Be instructed, *O England*, lest his heart depart from thee; lest he make thee desolate; a land not inhabited.²

It is to be assumed as a fixed principle of God's jurisprudence, that the heavy lighting down of his arm shall sooner or later ever attend iniquity, whether national or individual.

This was abundantly manifested in the misery that befel our first parents on the original transgression: in the judgment that whelmed in one wide watery grave the inhabitants of the antediluvian world; in the fiery desolation discharged upon the wicked cities of the plain; in the overthrow of

¹ Note XIV.

² Note XV.

Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, and ancient Rome : yea, in the summary destruction eventually executed on guilty Jerusalem. In all these tremendous visitations, the Almighty plainly declared, that iniquity should not go unpunished ; but that sin is the disgrace, and ultimately the ruin of any people. Individual offenders are frequently reprieved in this life ; reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished ; but, as it has been well observed, to nations there is no hereafter, therefore they must be punished in the present world.

Recollect, now, all the various vices and enormities with which this nation is but too chargeable. Lukewarmness in religion, drunkenness, infidelity, lying, swearing, and perjury ; Luxury, voluptuousness, and impurity, political agitation and oppression, and remember how all these sins are denounced in Scripture. “ I would thou wert cold or hot ; so then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”¹ “ Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter ! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust : because they have cast away the LORD of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of

¹ Rev. iii. 15, 16.

Israel, therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched out his hand against them." &c.¹ "Woe unto them that rise up in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it."² "Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but they are not grieved at the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go into captivity with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.—Therefore will I deliver up the city, with all that is therein. And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten in one house, that they shall die."³ "For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth."⁴ "Moreover the LORD saith,

¹ Isaiah v. 20—25.

³ Amos vi. 3—9.

² Isaiah v. 11—14.

⁴ Jerem. xxiii. 10.

Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore the LORD will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion,—and it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be a stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well-set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty men in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she, being desolate, shall sit upon the ground.”¹ “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten up the vineyard, and the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the LORD of Hosts.”² “Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail,—the LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth

¹ Isaiah iii. 16—26.² Isaiah iii. 12—15.

therein?"¹ "Sin is a reproach to any people."² "The LORD turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein."³ "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee (i. e. his Church) shall perish."⁴ "Behold, the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth."⁵

Reader, put all these solemn denunciations and the signs of the times together—namely, the revival of popery; the passion for innovation and revolution; the separation from the world of the Lord's people; the general expectation of some great event at hand; and say, is there not but too much reason for serious apprehension? Is not the consequence clear from the premises, that this kingdom, unless it timely and truly repent, shall be overtaken with reproach, and punishment, and ruin? And if these things be so, is it not the part of wisdom and prudence to inquire, what is our appropriate DUTY at such a period? and how may we escape those things which are coming on the earth? The exhibition of this shall be attempted in the next ensuing chapters.

¹ Amos viii. 4—8.

² Proverbs xiv. 34.

³ Psalm cvii. 34.

⁴ Isaiah lx. 12.

⁵ Amos ix. 8.

LECTURE III.

THE DUTY OF THE UNCONVERTED.

"Repent ye; and believe the gospel."—MARK I. 15.

How various soever may be the modifications of character in a human point of view, the word of GOD divides all mankind into but two grand classes; the believing and the unbelieving; the righteous and the unrighteous; the people of CHRIST and the children of Belial.¹ This is a most important division, ever to be carefully observed in spiritual things; especially in administering spiritual counsel. He, who assumes this office, must 'make a difference,' rightly dividing the word of truth, so as to give to each his portion of meat in due season.

What constitutes this vast distinction between persons is CONVERSION. This it is which draws that strong, though invisible, line of demarcation between the church and the world; between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Apollyon; and, crossing which the person is passed from death unto life.

Now we shall address first, those who have *not*

¹ See 2 Cor. vi. 14—16.

made this momentous transition; in which class, be it observed, are included—not merely the vicious and profligate, but also all those, who, though as to outward conduct unexceptionable, and even estimable, are yet not truly and vitally religious; who keep (in an external manner) the commandments of the second table, but neglect those of the first: who perform their duty toward their neighbour, but omit their duty toward their Maker. “Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength:” this is ‘the first and GREAT commandment:’ and therefore, whoso keepeth not this, however amiable and commendable he may be in the eye of Man, is in the eye of HIM who demands the heart, essentially wicked. The neglect of the greatest duty must be the greatest sin.

Let such then suffer a word of affectionate exhortation. I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say. I write, dear Reader, with a hearty desire and prayer for your benefit; and, to ‘the law and to the testimony,’ if I write not according to this word, it is because there is no light in me.

Your immediate duty then, under the circumstances considered, is expressed in that sentence of our Saviour—“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.”¹

¹ Mark i. 15.

Repentance is a most solemn and indispensable duty. The occasion, or necessity for it, is our deplorable state by nature and practice : a state wherein we are dead in trespasses and sins ; walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.¹ Accordingly our Lord declares, that "except we repent, we shall all perish ;" that "except we be born again, we cannot see the kingdom of God." The impenitent person treasures up unto himself "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."² Repentance, therefore is repeatedly inculcated throughout both Testaments, and without it there is no possibility of salvation.³

But what is denoted by the term ? Notwithstanding the numerous sermons preached, and the many excellent treatises published, respecting it, there is reason to fear that much misapprehension still prevails as to its real nature ; and of course, this, on a subject so vitally important, must be peculiarly dangerous. 'Take heed' says an old divine, of mistaking in the great work of believing and repenting. Faith and repentance are the two great gospel graces : and the reason why so many miscarry to all eternity is not for want of them, but upon a mistake in thinking they have them,

¹ Eph. ii. 1—3.

² Romans ii. 5.

³ See Ezek. xviii. 0, 31 ; Isa. lv. 7. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts iii. 19 ; v. 31.

when they have but a shadow of them. Where one goeth to hell by desperation, hundreds go thither by presumption.' ¹

I shall therefore endeavour, as far as my limits will allow, somewhat to elucidate the subject : and with this view shall commence by stating, in the first instance, what is *not* repentance.

First, then, any thing of the nature of *penance* or bodily suffering, is not this work. We read in the fifth chapter of the Acts,² that Christ "*gives* repentance:" but the idea of his giving *penance* or suffering, is manifestly absurd ; besides, he himself promises "*rest*," not suffering, to them that come to him.³ But indeed, to prove this point we need only recur to the original Greek term (*μετανοία*,) which undeniably denotes a change of mind. Therefore, every thing of a mere extraneous character falls short of repentance.

Secondly ; Mere *sorrow for sin* is not. The gambler, or the drunkard, or the fornicator, for example, may be mightily grieved for his transgression, on the mere ground of the loss of money, or of reputation, or of health, or of mental quiet, which it has occasioned to him : yet such sorrow may be very far removed from genuine repentance, as is evidenced by the fact, that as soon as opportunity recurs, each seeks his sin again.

Thirdly ; A *temporary abstinence from transgression* is not the change in question. Pharaoh,

¹ Dr. CALAMY'S 'Godly Man's Ark.'

² Verse 31.

³ Matt. xi. 28—30.

under the immediate pressure of his plagues, humbled himself beneath the mighty hand of God, and yielded to the divine requirements; yet we know that his goodness, like the morning cloud, speedily vanished away, and was succeeded by a greater obduracy than ever. The same also was the case with the Israelites.¹

Fourthly ; *Not even outward morality*, if outward only, is the thing inquired after. Several of the heathens, as for instance Aristides, Socrates, and Pythagoras, were perfect exemplars of external virtue and integrity; yet they could not be termed penitents; for repentance is an *evangelical* grace. ' Even hypocrites have been famous for their reformations. The unclean spirit often goes out of the formal hypocrite, by an external reformation; and yet still retains his proprietary in them. Many that will never escape the damnation of hell, have yet escaped the pollutions of the world, and that by the knowledge of the Son of God.'² There is a reformation, the mere effect of inability to offend—a forced, not a willing amendment, arising from disease, or imprisonment, or old age. In such cases, the vessel ceases to sail, only because forsaken of the wind and tide. The person has not left his sins, but his sins have left him. The power to transgress is suspended; the inclination remains.

In none of these instances therefore, may the

individual be one hair's breadth nearer heaven. Nay, if he rests here, deceiving himself in a *seeming* penitence, he may be even more remote from heaven than ever. In this view, St. Augustine affirmed, that repentance damns more than sin. And to the same effect our Saviour declared to the self-righteous in his day, "The publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before you."

True repentance cleanses, not merely the outside of the cup, but the inside also. It is not only the clean hand, but the pure heart.¹ God desireth truth in the inward parts. The priests, under the Mosaic law, were commanded to wash the inwards, and offer them up in sacrifice before the LORD. In repentance therefore, not only does 'the wicked man forsake his *way*,' but 'the unrighteous man his *thoughts*.' Vain thoughts he hates, but God's law he loves. The vicious becomes holy; the moral, spiritual. The penitent lives not only "soberly and righteously," but "godly" also, in this present world.²

Repentance heals the heart's embittered fountain, and so, purifies "the issues of life." It makes the tree good; in consequence whereof, the fruit becomes so. The penitent being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, "brings forth fruits meet for repentance."

What are these?

1. *Humility*. Thus, Job, on his repenting, ex-

¹ Ezekiel xxxvi. 26, 27.

² Titus ii. 12.

claimed—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."¹ David, on his, confessed, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."² Similar was the language of the publican in the temple, "who would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, (so profound was his self-abasement,) but smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me the sinner!" (*τω ἀμαρτωλω.*) How different the language of the impenitent pharisee!—"God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are," &c.

2. *Sorrow for sin.* Not a mere selfish sorrow, but a "godly sorrow;" sorrow for having offended and dishonoured God; sorrow whose expression is—"Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." This is the contrite soul's chief burden, the distress that swallows up every other.

3. *Confession of sin.* The converts at Ephesus "came and confessed, and showed their deeds."³ And so we find the prodigal, that true picture of a penitent, likewise doing: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

4. *A filial feeling toward God,* and an accompanying hope of pardon. This essential ingredient was lacking in the penitence of Judas and of Cain. Each said, "Mine iniquity is greater than can be

— ¹ 1st Cor. xiii. 5, 6.

² Psalm li. 1—5.

³ Acts xix. 18.

forgiven:" thus, they both fell into that fearful depth of Satan—despair; which drowns men in destruction and perdition.¹ Their's was the sorrow of the world, that "worketh death."

But the language of the penitent, because the prompting of the Holy Spirit in his heart, is—"There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." "With thee there is mercy, and with thee, plenteous redemption." And this persuasion leads—

5. To *Prayer*. The penitent receives the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, "Abba, Father." The prodigal, on his restoration to a sound mind, is represented as saying, "I will arise and go to my Father;" and accordingly he went and addressed his father with that very appellation. Of St. Paul also it was testified, on *his* being turned to God, "Behold, he prayeth." And the penitent thief likewise besought Christ, "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom."

6. Repentance is attended with love to CHRIST. In its more matured stage, the penitent sees by faith the Saviour crucified for *him*—him individually; and consequently loves Christ, who so loved him. And the more this work is deepened in his heart, and the greater the insight he obtains into his own inbred depravity, the more, exactly,

¹ 'For want of confidence, repentance is false.—Every thing is wanting to a sinner, when hope is wanting, and there can be no hope in God, where there is no love of God. If nothing but fear of punishment excite a man to repentance, the more vehement this is, the more it leads to despair.'—QUINCE.

is his love to the Saviour increased. What an inimitably beautiful illustration of this we have in the gospel by St. Luke.¹ “And, behold, a woman of the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisees’ house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood, (in token of her humility,) at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.” Thus her ointment, hands, eyes, hair, lips, are now consecrated to the service of Christ her Saviour, whom she had offended.’²

7. Love to his people. This fruit follows immediately from the last; for “every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.”³ Hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”⁴ Thus, the jailor of Philippi, being brought to repent, so changed his deportment toward his prisoners, Paul and Silas, that whereas he had *thrust* them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks, he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes. The apostle Paul also, on his being given this same grace, consorted with that very people, whom previously he had persecuted unto death. He, who had been a wolf to the Saviour’s flock, now became one of its most tender shepherds; preaching that

¹ Chap. VII. 37, 38.

² See Bishop HALL’s *Contemplations*.

³ 1 John v. 1.

⁴ 1 John iii. 14.

faith, which once he destroyed. It is well observed by Bishop Hall, that if our satisfaction be not in some kind proportionable to our offence, we are no true penitents.

In short, Repentance is the “ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well:” the “breaking off our sins by righteousness;” the “turning from darkness unto light; from the power of Satan unto GOD.” It is not a renunciation of one sin only, or of any number of sins, but of sin altogether. ‘True grace attempts no composition; tolerates no lust, no not the bosom darling corruption.’¹ The penitent spares no tree in the grove, as a covering for his idol; but says with Ephraim, “What have I to do any more with idols?”² He casts away from him *all* his transgressions, whereby he has transgressed; and makes him a new heart, and a new spirit.”³ In a word, “he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

From these particulars it will appear, that true repentance differs very little from conversion. It is but an earlier stage of the same process. Repentance brings the sinner to the narrow gate, that leadeth unto life—conversion plants him in the state of grace. Repentance convinces the sinner of his need of a Saviour—conversion brings him to embrace the Saviour. Repentance shows him the way of GOD—conversion shows him it

¹ Psalm xviii. 23.

² Hosea xiv. 8.

³ Ezek. xviii. 31.

more perfectly. In fact, one is uniformly followed by the other; as it is written, "Repent ye, and be converted." They are not precisely identical; for Scripture has no superfluous word; yet their difference is in degree, not in nature. Both are operations of one and the self-same Spirit. In repentance he giveth grace—in conversion he giveth more grace. In repentance the rebel lays down his arms, confesses his guilt, and implores his sovereign's pardon. In conversion he enlists under the banners of the Captain of Salvation, to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end.¹

Now this momentous work of the Spirit, bringing us to God, is instrumental in saving us. But it supposes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: "for no man cometh unto the Father, but by him." Every gift descends to us through the Saviour; as light through the atmosphere. "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is given in the face of Jesus Christ." If we are accepted, it is "in the Beloved." In *Him* the Father is well-pleased with us. The believer is chosen in him: born again in him; justified in him; sanctified in him; and in him eventually glorified.¹ The Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life."² In a word, "Christ is the way,

¹ Rev. xvii. 14. ² Eph. i. 4. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17. Rom. viii. 17, 30.

³ Titus iii. 6.

the truth, and the life;" and we become spiritually alive unto God, simply by being mystically engrafted into him, as a branch into a tree. We are quickened together with Christ. If any man be in *Christ*, he is a new creature.¹

To unfold a little more this most important of doctrines, a work, which to the class of persons at present addressed may not be superfluous—let us recollect our state by nature and practice. It is far from being a *sinless* state. GOD made us upright; but we have sought out many inventions. He made us in his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. But the Fall of our first parents shattered that beautiful image to atoms. We have destroyed ourselves. "All flesh have corrupted their way, have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And what has he declared? "The soul, that sinneth, it shall die." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."²

Now can GOD revoke his word? Hath he said, and will he not perform? If so, then how could he be true? And if he be true, how can we escape? How can he be "a just God,"—just to his creatures generally, and to himself in particular—"yet a Saviour?" How can he, who is of purer eyes, than even to look upon iniquity, justify the ungodly? Here were questions beyond the power of any created intellect to answer. Here was the mystery that angels desired to investigate.

¹ 2 Cor. v. 17.

² Deut. xxvii. 26. Gal. iii. 10.

The Deity had no pleasure in our destruction. He entertained no vindictive feelings toward us. All such are utterly incompatible with his perfectly pure and happy nature. When, therefore, God describes himself in Scripture as "a jealous God," a "God to whom vengeance belongeth," he speaks after the manner of men; describes himself according to his *actions*; not his real emotions. All his animosity is against sin. Provided only this be condemned, and his law magnified and made honourable; and the immaculate purity of his character exemplified, and his authority vindicated and maintained—all is effected, that Jehovah desires. But how were objects so momentous to be accomplished? To render an adequate satisfaction for the guilt of a whole world, demanded an infinite sacrifice; and who could render this but God himself? And how could God suffer? Here again were difficulties to every finite intelligence absolutely insuperable. Yet were they surmounted in an admirable manner by the expedient actually adopted. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Son "loved us, and gave *himself* for us." In the fulness of the appointed time, he assumed our nature ("yet without sin") in the womb of the virgin; and though originally "Jehovah's fellow,"¹ and in the form of God, and equal with God,² yet

¹ Zech. xiii. 7.

² Philip. ii. 6.

he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **AS MAN** he suffered; as **GOD** he satisfied: and thus uniting in himself the two natures, became an all-sufficient days-man, or mediator, to lay a hand upon both, and eternally reconcile them.

Thus then is the stupendous problem solved. *Thus* it is that the Father can continue just, yet save the unjust. He did not violate his word, for he did not annul the curse denounced against iniquity. He only transferred it. He laid on Christ the iniquity of us all. Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree; suffered in our stead, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. "He finished the transgression; made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness." And seeing that Christ was the Creator of all things,¹ by this arrangement, the truth, and the justice, and the sanctity, and the authority of the Most High were exhibited and upheld in a manner far more emphatic and illustrious, than had all the human species been engulfed in the lake of vengeance.²

¹ Col. i. 16.

² This doctrine is finely stated in the following passage of Dr. CHALMERS:—"The great moral problem is to find acceptance in the mercy of God for those who have braved his justice, and done despite to the authority of his law; and that, without any compromise of truth and dignity. By the offered solution of the New Testament,

Observe then, Reader, you are not to look for salvation from the mere absolute mercy of God, irrespective of a Mediator. He will not exercise and indulge one of his attributes at the expense of another. The golden sceptre of mercy, which he extends to us in the Gospel, is wielded with the hand of "prudence,"¹ and studded with the gems of justice, purity, and truth. We are to be "looking for the mercy of *our Lord Jesus Christ*, unto eternal life."² He is the propitiatory, the meeting-place; the mercy-seat, where alone God will meet and commune with us.³ Out of Christ, "God is a consuming fire;" in Christ, he is love. In him mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In him, "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

a channel has been opened up, through a high mediatorship, (even the Son of God himself, one with the Father,) between God and man, for the descent of grace and mercy the most exuberant on a guilty world; and through it the overtures of reconciliation are extended unto all; and a sceptre of forgiveness, consecrated by the blood of a great atonement, has been stretched forth, even to the most polluted and worthless outcasts of the human family; and thus the goodness of the Divinity obtained its fullest vindication, yet not a goodness at the expense of justice; for the affront done to an outraged law has been amply repaid by the homage to its authority of an illustrious sufferer, who took upon himself the burden of all those penalties which we should have borne; and in the spectacle of whose deep and mysterious sacrifice God's hatred of moral evil stands forth in most impressive demonstration. So that instead of a conflict or a concussion between these two essential attributes of his nature, a way has been found by which each is enhanced to the uttermost, and a flood of most copious and combining illustration has been poured upon them both.'

¹ Eph. i. 8.

² Jude 21.

³ Compare Ex. xxv. 22, with 1 John ii. 2.

But, seeing that all men are not saved, for the Redeemer calls his own "a small little flock," (πομπιον μικρον) how, it may be asked, may an individual become a participant in the great salvation? The answer is—by *faith*. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."¹

Not that there is any *merit* in faith; for it is God's gift,² and simply the receiving of Christ and his salvation. So we read, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."³

Faith is the soul's *eye*, wherewith it beholds the SAVIOUR. "Look unto me," he says, "and be ye saved." And "we all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." Faith is the soul's *foot*, that carries it to Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," &c. "Come ye to the waters." Faith is the soul's *hand*, that "puts on" Christ, as a spiritual covering. Faith is the soul's *palate*, that "tastes that the Lord is gracious." Faith is the soul's *stomach*, that feeds on Christ; for "except we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us." In a word, "Christ dwells in the heart by faith."⁴

¹ Rom. v. 1, 2.² Ephes. ii. 8.³ John i. 12.⁴ Ephes. iii. 17.

Faith, then, “receives Christ Jesus the Lord ;” and receives him in all his offices,—as a Prophet, to teach ; a Priest, to atone ; and a King, to govern and defend. It recognizes him as a witness to his people ; a leader and commander unto his people : ¹ “ a Priest after the order of Melchisedec.”

Now mark—there are no *prerequisites* necessary to such a receiving of the Saviour. You must not forbear embracing Him, until you shall have obtained some fancied preparatory goodness, to fit you for, and entitle you to, his favour. He is willing to welcome you as you are, though your sins be as scarlet, or as crimson. He offers himself to you freely, gratuitously, cordially. If you defer closing with him, till you shall have acquired any preparatory worthiness to win you his acceptance, you will never go to him at all : for “ severed from him, you can do nothing.” ² Seeking any good thing in yourself is seeking the living among the dead. All the qualification you require is simply a sense of your *need* of Christ. ³ Yea, if you do not even feel this need, you must have recourse to him for the very feeling. He must be your Alpha, and your Omega : “ all our springs are in him.”

When we believe in Christ aright, all our iniquities are wholly carried away into a land of forgetfulness : for He is both the true Scape-goat, and the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins

¹ Isaiah lv. 4.

² John xv. 5.

³ Isaiah lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.

of the world. God hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in him. Then also we become dead to the law, in its *condemning* power : for “there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” We are “dead to sin,” so that it has not the dominion over us; we being “under grace.” Finally, we are dead to the world—that is, to its pomps and vanities, and sinful pleasures. We, being crucified with Christ; the world, his enemy, is crucified unto us, and we unto the world; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? The Christian has no more relish for the world’s carnal delights, than the world has for his spiritual ones. Thus then, the believer is delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. He is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD. And oh! with what privileges, what peace, what safety, must such a translation necessarily be attended! CHRIST is “the name of the LORD,” that strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is safe.” The wicked one toucheth him not. “He is kept by the power of GOD” (kept as in a garrison town, as the original term imports,) “through faith unto salvation.” His interest and the Saviour’s are henceforth identified; and as Christ is made the

head over all things to the Church, and must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, the believer is now on that side, which must infallibly be triumphant. What shall we then say to these things? If GOD be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? "All things are our's, when we are Christ's." ¹

But of what kind is the faith in Christ, which is followed by such advantages? A *heart* faith: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." ² And here, to return to our original topic, here is the immediate and necessary connection between justification and sanctification. A person cannot have faith, consequently cannot be justified, unless born of God. ³ So that, if justified, he is sanctified and glorified. Again, faith is the product of God's Spirit in the soul, and being so, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. For faith lays hold on the inspired word; this implants in the heart heavenly principles and motives, calculated suitably to influence the mind. These the Spirit uses as instruments in renewing and assimilating it to the Divine image. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

This, then, is another view of the inviolable union between justification and sanctification. The believer is God's workmanship, created in Christ

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

² Rom. x. 9, 10.

³ 1 John v. 1.

Jesus unto good works; "for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh; God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, (or, by a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Thus, then, beloved reader, I have endeavoured to exhibit to you the nature and advantages of the duties recommended. In conclusion let me earnestly beseech of you to obey the command of your adorable Redeemer, above cited,—“repent ye, and believe the gospel.” Repentance is fit and right in itself. It is the only reparation you can be enabled to render to that all-glorious Being, to whom our whole lives should be one living sacrifice; but against whom we have all so deeply, deeply revolted, “worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.

It is essential to your *own immediate happiness*. This may seem a paradox to those, who are accustomed to associate happiness only with carnal gaiety and dissipation, and to identify religion with gloom and melancholy. They put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; miscalling her “Mara,” whose real name is “Naomi.” And, it must be admitted, that the sad and sombre demeanor of many well-disposed persons, owing either to something unhealthy in their natural temperament, or to defective views of the gospel, has greatly contributed to corroborate this wrong and injurious preju-

dice respecting religion. But let God be true, though every man should be a liar; and he declares, that "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And such the rightly pious have ever found them. Great peace have they that love God's law, and nothing shall offend them. Wisdom is justified of all her children. In proof whereof, where is the genuine Christian who would relinquish religion for all that the universe could offer him? "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." True, some who "*seemed* to be religious," have accompanied the Saviour a certain way, and then walked no more with him; but were such ever his disciples indeed? No; for says St. John, "If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us." "They that are with the Lamb are called, and chosen, and *faithful*."

Can that be a melancholy principle, which relieves from alarms of conscience, emancipates from domineering evil passions; strengthens under temptations, comforts under tribulations; fortifies against the assaults of the world and the devil; yea, against the fear of the king of terrors himself, and kindles, even in the article of death, a hope full of immortality? Can this possibly be a melancholy principle? If so, then, what in the whole world is joyous?¹ Religion denies us

¹ 'What mortal is there that can have so much reason to rejoice, as

nothing that is truly profitable for us, and abates the desire of any thing beside. All her prohibitions are briefly comprehended in this injunction, "Do thyself no harm." She is the discreet parent that withholds from her children the sword or the poison, but grants them every expedient gratification. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Her's are the nether and the upper springs. And though, undeniably, many are the troubles of the righteous, yet amidst them all, an oil is suffused upon the troubled waters, an unction from the Holy One—an oil of gladness, which enables the believer to rise superior to them, and to verify the promise of the Saviour, "In me ye shall have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."¹

Is it thus with the ungodly? Ah! no: they "are like the troubled sea, when it *cannot* rest; there is no peace, saith God, to the wicked." He that is in the "bond of iniquity" is in the "gall of bitterness."² Vanity is ever attended with vexation of spirit. Thus then, the change we have been considering is indispensable to your own true happiness.

the true Christian, who has God for his companion, his way to salvation, and his glorious end; to whom God is a Father, Christ a Redeemer, the Spirit a comforter, angels his servants, the world his slave, and heaven for his inheritance; whose enemies are rendered beneficial, afflictions salutary medicines; and death itself his gain?—Bishop HALL: 'Treatise on Walking with God.'

¹ John xvi. 33.

² Acts viii. 23.

Again, it is indispensable to your being *forgiven your sins*; as we have proved already. “Repentance and remission of sins,” are in scripture coupled and inseparable.

Once more : Repentance is indispensable to *admission into heaven*. For, says Christ, “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”¹ And be it distinctly understood, that this spiritual renovation is necessary for all—for a moral Nicodemus, as well as for a profligate Mary Magdalene. “If *any* man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” In him, nothing availeth but a new creature.²

Trust not then, in an amiable temper or moral life. Christianity demands something more transcendent—even the consecration of the *heart* unto God. We must be spiritual, as well as moral. We must set our “affections on things above;” “for, to be carnally” or worldly “minded, is death.” In all true piety, this self-dedication to God is fundamental. Unless we give the heart to him, he accepts of nothing. First, give your own selves unto the Lord.

And is not this our *reasonable* service?³ Is not any other, but a dead carcase and hollow mockery? And “God is not mocked.” “Offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the LORD of hosts?”⁴

Who appreciates the obedience of the galley-

¹ John iii. 3. See also Matt. xviii. 3.

² Gal. vi. 15.

³ Rom. xii. 1.

⁴ Mal. i. 8.

slave, who toils in chains, and under the dread of punishment? It is the glorious privilege of the obedience of the gospel, to be one of "liberty;" a "work of faith, and labour of love." "The love of Christ constraineth us;" and God will accept only "a free-will offering."

Until converted, therefore, you are "dead in trespasses and sins;" "enemies to God;"¹ "haters of God;"² "bonds-men of Satan,"³ and "children of wrath."⁴ O! unspeakably horrible state! How eager should you be to be rescued from it! Had you a deadly disease preying on your vitals, how wretched would you be, till it were eradicated! Such a disease is sin to the soul. It fills it with wounds and putrifying sores,—all those virulent lusts and vices, those moral corruptions, which prove such a perpetual source of sorrow and vexation. How far more dreadful is such a disease in the soul, than any whatsoever in the body. '*Corruptio optimi est pessima.*' O then, how importunate should you be in imploring GOD, to deliver you from this body of death, and restore you to a state of spiritual soundness! "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

It never can be well with us, till it is well with our souls. And the soul cannot be in a right state, till it is settled upon GOD,—its original centre, and

¹ Rom. v. 10.

² 2 Tim. ii. 26.

³ Rom. viii. 7; i. 30.

⁴ Eph. ii. 3.

only rest. Conversion, by restoring us to Him, restores us to ourselves. Previously to experiencing this change, we are alienated from God, and beside ourselves. The prodigal at his conversion, "came to himself."

Let your soul then "return unto her rest." When God saith to thee, "Seek my face," say promptly and gratefully to him, 'Thy face, LORD, will I seek.'

Remember, however, you cannot turn yourself. 'No man can *keep* alive his own soul,' much less *make* it alive. But what is impossible with you, is possible with the Almighty. He '*gives* repentance unto the acknowledgment of the truth.' He '*grants* repentance unto life.' Turn ye at his reproof: behold, he will pour out his spirit unto you; he will make known his word unto you. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." You must therefore *pray*, and that without ceasing. You must wait upon the Lord, and wait patiently upon him, taking no denial, but wrestling till the dawning of the day, like Jacob, and saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

Meanwhile, you must do what you can. You must renounce your evil haunts, and evil associates, and live up to the light you possess. "If any man will do the will of the Father, he shall know of the doctrine." For "the secret of the LORD is with them that fear him, and he will show *them* his covenant." "The path of the *just* is as the shin-

ing light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

You must wait upon the Lord in the use of those *means of grace*, which he hath appointed,—the reading and hearing of his holy word. Believers are born again by the word of God.¹ "I have begotten you, through the gospel," writes St. Paul to the Corinthians.² "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."³ The Bereans "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so: *therefore* many of them believed." The Saviour affirmed, that if he were lifted up, (especially in a faithfully-preached gospel,) he would "draw all men unto him." And so it has uniformly been experienced. That which dissolves the icy heart, and transmutes the flint into a fountain of tears, is a believing sight of the Lord Jesus, and of him crucified. As it is written, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn." Accordingly, when the Jews heard St. Peter preach on this very topic, on the day of Pentecost, they were pricked in their heart, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"⁴ Mr. Flavel beautifully defines repentance to be 'the tear that drops from the eye of faith, while looking to Jesus.'

Be entreated, then, to seek this change forthwith. If, as you have been shown, it would conduce to your happiness, can you be happy too soon? Remember that awful text, "He, that

¹ 1 Pet. i. 23. ² 1 Cor. iv. 15. ³ Rom. x. 17. ⁴ Acts ii. 37.

being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”¹ Remember that if, like the sons-in-law of Lot, you linger in Sodom, your judgment lingereth not. If you slumber on in sin, your damnation slumbereth not. Awake then, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Wisely follow the example of David, “I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. *I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*”² What speed should you make in that affair, whereon depends your welfare throughout eternity! Conversion is the soul’s great era; the grand turning-point; the momentous transition from death unto life; the dawn of immortality; the gate of heaven.

Several passages of the inspired volume announce the approach of a great and terrible DAY, a day different from the *last* day, one designated the great day of the LORD. That will be “a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness;”³—a day that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Now, “this great day of the Lord is

¹ Prov. xxix. 1.

² Psalm cxix. 59, 60.

³ Zeph. i. 15. See also Isaiah xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Obad. 15, 16. Zeph. ii. 8. Ezek. xxxviii.

near; it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD."

While then the Lord waiteth, that he may be gracious; while he gives you space to repent; to lay down the arms of your rebellion, and touch his golden sceptre—"redeem the time;" escape from the city of destruction; flee, flee to JESUS: flee for your life! "Flee ye to the strong-hold, ye prisoners of hope."

Be not gainsayers. 'The times are very awful,' say we. 'So have they always been,' some rejoin. Let such persons see themselves described and denounced in that passage of the Apostle; "knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lust, and saying, where is the promise of his coming?" &c.¹ "Now therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong." Account the long-suffering of the Lord to be salvation: for they who despise the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, only treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who shall render unto every man according to his deeds; and "punish those that are settled upon their lees; that say in their hearts, The LORD will not do good, neither shall he do evil."² Therefore be prevailed upon. "Seek ye the LORD, while he may be found; call ye upon him, while he is near. Before

¹ 2 Peter iii. 3, 4.

² Zeph. i. 12.

the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you ; seek righteousness, seek meekness ; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger."

LECTURE IV.

THE DUTY OF BELIEVERS.

“Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”—
REV. ii. 5.

I AM now to attempt the indication of the duty of those in these times who “*have received Christ Jesus the Lord,*” and are in consequence justified and sanctified. On them also repentance seems incumbent. For though they have, through grace, made the grand transition from the territory of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and are therefore not to lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, but to build themselves up on their most holy faith, a spiritual living temple of the Lord,—yet, “what is man, that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?”¹ “There is no man that sinneth not.”² Even God’s children have their spots.³ Even in them, though the hereditary leprosy of sin is under a process of destruction, still it is not entirely

¹ Job xv. 41.

² 1 Kings viii. 46.

³ Deut. xxxii. 5.

destroyed. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."¹ Therefore, "God commandeth ALL men everywhere to repent;"² and accordingly it was the sentiment of Augustine, one which will readily be responded to by every one who has been taught to know himself, that the holiest saint on earth hath need of repentance, up to the latest moment of his life.

Were there a period in the pilgrimage of any mortal, when he could truly say, "I have made my *heart* clean," then would there be a period, when repentance to that individual would be superfluous. But our Saviour, in directing us to pray daily 'forgive us our trespasses,' intimates that we daily offend; and so St. James affirms—"in many things we offend *all*." And the sins of God's people are peculiarly displeasing to Him, as committed against peculiar light and mercy, and tending more than all others to his dishonour. "You only have I known—therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."³

But of what sins, especially, are believers, in these days, called upon to repent? Surely of their excessive worldliness; their being and doing so much like others; so little devoted to God, in comparison with what they ought to be, considering his distinguishing favours toward them. Should they not repent also of their remaining pride, un-

¹ 1 John i. 8.² Acts xviii. 30.³ Amos iii. 2.

belief, distrust of God, and unmortified evil tempers and passions? Should they not repent of their unfruitfulness; or, if not, of their want of more simplicity of motive? We cannot scrutinize each others' hearts; but let every Christian examine how far it may not be affirmed of him, as it was of Ephraim, "he is an empty vine; he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." ¹

A small modicum of piety goes far in these 'lean years.' If a person do but refrain from the same excess of riot, into which the dissipated rush; if he read religious publications, and associate with religious people, and evince some little zeal and interest in the cause of benevolence and of the Gospel, he is straightway esteemed, and esteems himself a genuine and decided Christian; albeit his speech be censorious, his tempers unhallowed, and his habits generally, saving in the particulars specified, like those of the majority. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness."

Though the godly are doubtless growing in grace; though there is not the same amalgamation of them with the world, that formerly there was, yet they are very far still from standing forth from the dark mass, as they ought to do, beaming with the beauty of holiness. They are not sufficiently "a peculiar people,"—"a people dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations."

¹ Hosea x. 1.

Thus, the worldly behold but a marred and mutilated form of Christianity. They see the Church, that mystic moon, shorn of her beams and beclouded. They are stumbled at observing high profession compatible with low practice, and either uncandidly affix the stigma of hypocrisy to all Christians indiscriminately, or else deny the superiority of the Gospel, as a religious system. Numbers, too, it is to be apprehended, who seek to enter heaven, are hereby led to consider the entrance easier than it really is. The beacon at the harbour's mouth is lowered ; so that the mariner, imagining there is more water over the rocks than there is indeed, concerning faith makes shipwreck ! “ Woe unto the world because of offences ! for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh ! ” Such incur the two-fold guilt, of neither entering the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffering them that would, to enter.

Labour, then, Christians ! to be Christians indeed. Either make the tree good, and the fruit good ; or else make the tree corrupt, and the fruit corrupt ; that the tree may be known by its fruits. Be cold or hot. Be one thing or the other. How long halt ye between two opinions ? As ye have received how ye ought to walk, and to please God, abound more and more. “ Be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Be not obedient in some things only,

but "in all things;" stand perfect and entire in all the will of God; study to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Are ye the Lord Christ's? bought with the price of his blood? Is his title graven on your hearts with a pen—

'Dipped in the fountain of eternal love!'

Do you bear his image and superscription? Then "render unto God the things that are his." Yield yourselves unto Him, as those that are alive from the dead. "For if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him. If we deny him, (either by word or deed, for actions have a language more expressive than words,¹) he also will deny us; He cannot deny himself; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

When we shall once have attained to the denying of ourselves, and taking up our cross daily, and following the Lord fully,—when, as good soldiers of the Captain of our salvation, we accompany him without the camp, bearing his reproach, and enduring hardness,—when we shall have acquired that love, which beareth all things and endureth all things, for Christ's sake, and the elect's sake, and the truth's sake; when we possess that faith which purifieth the heart, and worketh by love, and overcometh the world; so

¹ 'Before God and men words are silent, while actions speak, nay, cry aloud.'—Bishop HALL, 'on Walking with God.'

that, like that glorious woman mentioned in the Apocalypse, emblematical of the Church, we are "clothed with the sun, and the moon is under our feet," then, then indeed shall we be Christians in earnest; and men shall take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus. O, when shall it once be?

Influenced by considerations so high and solemn, let us obey the divine admonition—"repent, and do the first works." "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD." Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens. Let us return unto "the ancient days," the days of primitive Christianity; when the beauty of the Lord their God was upon believers; when they "praised God, and had favour with all the people: and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."¹

Would you repent truly? Then, like Peter, look unto Jesus. What wounds are those in his bleeding body? Alas! those with which he has been wounded in the house of his friends! Consider against *whom* you have transgressed. Even against that good and loving Saviour, whom you were bound by every imaginable obligation to honour and glorify; consider how you have neglected his ordinances, broken his laws, which are holy, and just, and good—how, by your uneven walk, your inconsistent conduct, you have crucified to yourself the Son of God afresh, and put him to

¹ Acts II. 47.

an open shame—consider all these things, and surely, it cannot be, but you will feel heartily sorry for these your misdoings; even with that “godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.”

Let Christians repent also of their mutual *strifes and contentions*. May not each of us exclaim in this respect, “I am verily guilty concerning my brother?” Yes, we have too much resembled communities necessarily and inevitably opposed, and whose aims and interests are essentially irreconcilable; instead of being like those whose aims and interests are really identical and inseparable. In place of contending with the common foe, with those weapons which are not carnal, but spiritual, we have unnaturally contended one with another; hereby weakening our cause, strengthening the hands of our enemies, and disgracing our holy Redeemer. It was remarked of old, “Behold, how these Christians love one another!” Alas! latterly it might be said, “Behold, how they bite and devour one another!”

How contrary this course is to the mind and commands of CHRIST, a very few passages of his word will suffice to exhibit. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (what obtestation could be more impressive?) that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it has been declared unto

me of you, brethren, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?"¹ &c. "For are ye not carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"² "There should be no *schism* in the body; but the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."³ "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."⁴

The worst consequence resulting from these divisions is—that they "grieve the Holy Spirit of God." As we may have witnessed in the season of Spring,—the earth is cultivated and sown with seeds, but the ground is dry and chapped; and the clouds have been long gathering over the sky, and would fain descend in genial showers, and water the earth, and cause it to bring forth and bud; but a cold and piercing easterly wind prevails, and keeps away the wished-for effusion, so that the weather resembles a dry grief, and vege-

¹ 1 Cor. i. 10—13.

² Ibid. xii. 25—27.

³ Ibid. iii. 3, 4.

⁴ Phil. iii. 15, 16.

tation is suspended. Even so it seems to be in the spiritual kingdom at present. The seed of the word has been plentifully scattered, and the church gasps as the arid ground for the fertilizing showers of grace: but alas! that "rain from heaven is restrained;" the Spirit of the LORD is straitened. A cold, contracting, and repulsive temper, prevailing among professors of religion, offends the blessed Reviver, and causes Him to withhold his precious communications. "Our iniquities have turned away these things, and our sins have withholden good things from us."

Let us then learn wisdom for the future. Let us "put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man:" "above all, let us put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Oh! for the grace to do this!—"to lay aside all malice, all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speakings, —all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour,—and to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us."

Should not our present trials and perils soften and lenify our hearts? "Without are fightings, and within are fears." Even national *enemies*, when they meet in a foreign country, wisely forget their old animosities, and coalesce for their common advantage. Now are not we "strangers and pilgrims" upon the earth? Are we not in a foreign land, in an enemy's country? How much more then should we, who are "brethren," and not

foes, be perfectly joined together in amity and affection. It is noted by the Holy Spirit, in connexion with the disputes that arose between the herd-men of Abram and those of his nephew Lot, that "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land ;" implying, that disputes, under *such* circumstances, were particularly impolitic and scandalous. Have we not all one Leader and Commander ?¹ One banner²—one armour³—one war-song ?⁴ And have we not all in view one glorious crown of conquest ? O then, why fall out by the way ? Why not march in harmony ? why not step together, to the same divine music, the melody of Aaron's bells ? O, that there were such an heart in us !

In union is strength. With "bands" there is "beauty."⁵ The church is edified in love. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity in itself : whereas, a kingdom divided against itself can never stand. 'Unity is policy,' says Matthew Henry. 'While the builders of Babel, though of different families, dispositions, and interests, were thus unanimous in opposing God ; what a pity it is, and what a shame, that the builders of Zion, though united in one common head and spirit, should be divided as they are in serving God.' Then let us cease from contending, henceforth : or, if we must contend, let it be for the faith once delivered unto

¹ Isaiah lv. 4.² Cant. ii. 4.³ Eph. vi. 11—18.⁴ Exod. xv. 1—3.⁵ Zech. xi. 7.

the saints. Christians should really lay this duty seriously to heart ; for it is not a vain thing for us ; because it is our life. Let us ponder deeply the injurious consequences arising from strifes and divisions, and the happy results likely to flow from unanimity, and charge our duty solemnly on our souls. Do we hold the head—even CHRIST ? then let us hold together, as members of his body. While we act otherwise, we eat the flesh of our own arm.¹ Do we agree in the “ great things ” ? Let us not disagree about the minor ones. What is the chaff to the wheat ? What are the circumstantialia to the substantialia ? It is a time for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, to love one another without dissimulation. It is a time to exercise the utmost possible wariness, fidelity, and firmness. It is a time for Christians to stand by each other, in one invincible phalanx, one “ band of brothers,” and strive together for the faith of the Gospel. Our enemies live, and are mighty, are crafty as strong, and united as crafty. They are banded together, as one man, against the common salvation. Therefore, ‘ the jealousies of Christians, who are united substantially in their views of evan-

¹ ‘ Bishop Bossuet prophesied an hundred and seventy years ago, that the Protestant religion would fall to pieces by its own divisions, and that, by simply adhering to unity of doctrine, the Catholic faith, one and indivisible, would ultimately again spread over the whole Christian world. The present times, more than any other that have existed since the prophecy was made, give too much reason to fear that it may be accomplished.’—From BLACKWOOD’S Magazine for August 1835.

gelical doctrine and religion, and who are divided only by localities, and rites, and forms, must yield and give place to the glorious exigencies of the present day. The amalgamation of denominations is not required. The division of labour may greatly augment its amount, and the provocation to love and good works may be real and salutary, and still be conducted without invidious collision. Like the tribes of Israel, we may all encamp about the tabernacle of God, each under his own standard, and when the ark advances, may all move onward, terrible only to the powers of darkness. And if the enemies of righteousness are not sufficient to rebuke our selfishness, and force us into a coalition of love and good works, then, verily, it may be expected, and even hoped, that God, by the fire of persecution, will purge away our dross, and take away our tin, until we shall love him, and his cause, and one another, with a pure heart fervently.’¹

Let no one denomination attempt any more to monopolize the church to themselves, saying in a spirit of exclusiveness, “the temple of the LORD are we.” But let all cultivate a spirit of candour, catholicity, and enlargement. “For there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above

¹ It was the opinion of Mr. Cecil, that, as the church had endured a pagan and a papal, so there remained for her an infidel, persecution, ‘general, bitter, purifying, and cementing.’—Rev. E. BICKERSTETH.

all, and through all, and in you all." To act in this spirit, and not in that of bigotry and prejudice, "hateful and hating," is the way to please Christ, and to convince the world that Christianity is divine. What was the Saviour's last intercession for his followers? "That they all may be one in us; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us; *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*" How unspeakably important then, in this light, are brotherly love and unity among all the Lord's disciples! And how proportionably great is their responsibility if they do not evince these excellences! They are set for the fall or the rising again, of many. They must be to the world a savour either of life unto life, or else of death unto death. And let us be assured, that, as nothing could more delight the Saviour, whom we should pre-eminently desire to delight, than unity and concord among his people, so, nothing could be more efficacious in "turning to flight the armies of the aliens," and extending the triumphs of the truth. Were evangelical churches to unite, as the children of one family, for the defence and propagation of their common faith, then, though separately weak and powerless, they would form in the hands of JEHOVAH so many rods, bound in one bundle of strength, wherewith he would thresh the mountains. What is his promise to Zion? "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know

not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel ; for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor. Arise and thrash, O daughter of Zion : for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass ; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people : and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the LORD of the whole earth.”¹ Again, what says God in another passage ? “ O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways ! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him ; but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the fat of the wheat, and with honey out of the stony rock should I have satisfied thee.”²

The adversary perceives all this too well : therefore he aims to detach, that he may destroy us. His policy is, “ Divide, and rule.”³ Let us not

¹ Micah iv. 11—13.

² Psalm lxxxi. 13—16.

³ It is related of a certain renowned naval hero, now living, that while cruising with his little squadron, consisting of but his own and a smaller vessel, he one evening espied two large ships of the enemy, anchored parallel to each other in a bay. Not judging it prudent openly to attack them, he ordered his smaller vessel to stand out a little to sea, while he himself, under cover of the dusk, dropped down between them, poured a broadside into one, and then glided on with the tide, out of the way. The people in the ship, thus aroused, deemed that it was their neighbour-ship which had so hostilely assaulted them, and returned the fire : this provoked a retaliation from the other, and thus the two continued firing into each other, until both were entirely dismantled. Meanwhile, the British commodore was gazing quietly on, enjoying the conflict, and when he saw the

be ignorant of his devices, but reaping prudence from past experience, in future defeat his machinations. "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." Every Christian, and consequently every community of Christians, has a multitude of defects, but over all these the hand of charity will reverently draw a kindly mantle. Walking together heaven-ward in this spirit, Christians will be clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners; and the confession shall be forced from the lips, even of our enemies—"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river side; as the trees of lign-aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as the cedar-trees beside the waters. He shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows." A late writer, commenting on that passage in Genesis, "They journeyed, and the terror of the LORD was upon the cities round about them," observes, 'Never did the church of God keep steadily forward on her journey to Bethel, but she struck terror into her enemies.'¹

success of his scheme, made signals to his companion to approach; upon which he fell upon the enemy, and made them an easy prize. The application of this incident to the policy of our spiritual adversary, appears sufficiently obvious.

¹ MORRISON on Genesis xxxv. 5.

But would we preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, we must beware of *heresies* and *novelties*. The present age, perilous and portentous in many respects, is so peculiarly on account of its direful errors and delusions. Numbers who did run well in the good old way in which thousands and tens of thousands have walked in holiness unto glory, have "stumbled from the ancient paths," and "separated themselves" from their fellow-pilgrims into endless knots and sections, each styling itself, the Church of Christ,¹ whereas their very conduct clearly proves them not to be such, since Christ inculcates unity. They, in causing divisions, do, however undesignedly, the work of the devil. But once they have been smitten with the baleful hallucination, and submitted their minds to the mysterious oracular *voice*, no opinion is too preposterous, too contradictory to the plain word of scripture, for them to espouse. Yea, the more monstrous and extravagant the tenet is, the greater they account their faith in adopting it. They will listen to no arguments; be influenced by no remonstrances of friends or ministers: no, not by the authority of revelation itself. They are bowed down by a yoke of bondage so debasing, that popery itself is almost freedom compared with it. This is in general attended, as might have been anticipated, with a very observable degeneracy in practice; it "increases to more ungod-

¹ Note XVI.

liness." Accordingly, heresies are called in Scripture, "roots of bitterness," "roots bearing gall and wormwood."¹

This feature of the age has been foretold, with a sagacity so nearly approaching the prophetic, by an eminent American divine, in a sermon delivered some eight or nine years since, in New York, that the author cannot forbear citing from the passage: 'One other source,' says he, 'of opposition to the progress of Christianity remains to be mentioned. There may be an attempt to wield the church against herself by corrupting the purity of revivals of religion. In this manner was the glory of the Reformation eclipsed, and vital religion in the time of Cromwell made a scoff and a by-word. The same attempt was made in New England early in the days of our fathers. It was repeated in the time of Whitfield and the immortal Edwards, with lamentable, though with but partial success. As revivals shall become more extensive, and the Spirit of God shall awake larger portions of the community at once, opportunity will be afforded to the enemy; and, apprised of his devices, we ought not to think that the opportunity will be neglected, of mingling false fire with holy zeal, for the purpose of throwing discredit upon a work which threatens a speedy overthrow of his empire.'²

¹ Compare Deut. xxix. 18, with Heb. xii. 15, and 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.

² From an admirable Sermon entitled 'the Resources of the Adversary,' preached before the American board of Missions, by LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

The Scriptures admonish us, "Be not many masters;"¹ that is, teachers, (*διδάσκαλοι*.) They declare that "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;"² that is, duly qualified and consecrated. And of the imminent peril of an unauthorized intrusion into sacred things, they hold out several tremendous warnings, as in those that perished in the gainsaying of Core; in the leprosy inflicted on king Uzziah; and in the sudden death that befel him, who, with even a good intention, put forth his hand to uphold the falling ark. Yet all these admonitions are now entirely disregarded. 'Schism' has ceased to be accounted a sin, and ordination is held of hardly any value or necessity. Every one presumes to do that which is right in his own eyes. 'Fools boldly rush where angels fear to tread;' and teachers are nearly as numerous as the taught.

Such is the pride of men's hearts, that almost every tyro in divinity, thinks himself a master of Israel. In the language of an old writer, 'they would be in the temple of honour, before they are in the temple of virtue; who step into Moses' chair, without Aaron's bells and pomegranates.'³ There are now many Theudases, each 'boasting himself to be somebody.' Almost daily do 'men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.' Adventurers run to and fro,

¹ James iii. 1.

² Hebrews v. 4.

³ Rev. THOMAS WATSON, 'On Divine Contentment.'

propagating the most crude, mischievous, and unscriptural speculations. In this they are encouraged by the Athenian spirit of the age. All desire to hear some new thing. However wild or enormous the notion may be, provided only it bears the stamp of novelty, it passes with these as sterling currency, and its circulators are extolled to the skies, as 'the great power of God.'

Thus, long-established verities are rejected for vagaries that spring up in a night. The heavenly manna is loathed as 'light bread.' The great doctrines of the Christian religion, the incarnation, the death, the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the future judgment, and the eternal states of men, all become even as antiquated things. The apostle's prediction is verified emphatically: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables."¹

How seasonable at such a time is the premonition of our Saviour; "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo! here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before."² Or, that of St. Paul, "Be not carried

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.

² Matt. xxiv. 23—25.

about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is good that the heart be established with grace."¹ Or that of St. John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."² "Who does not see the propriety of numbering schisms among the works of the flesh?³ of marking those which cause divisions among them, as serving not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own selves;⁴ seeking a name and party for themselves, "instead of forbearing one another in love," to win souls to Christ."⁵

These experimentors should be shunned as the very pests and nuisances of society; as those "that trouble Israel." What saith the Apostle of such? "I would they were even cut off which trouble you."⁶ Some well-disposed persons are in the habit of receiving into their houses and to their tables these irregular teachers, because of their reputed piety, a practice that encourages them in their erratic courses, and procures them influence among the unwary and illiterate. It is like endorsing with a good name a bad bill. The prohibition of St. John is express upon this particular: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."⁷

¹ Heb. xiii. 9.⁴ Rom. xvi. 17, 18.² 1 John iv. 1.⁵ Rev. C. BRIDGES.⁷ 2 John 10, 11.³ Gal. v. 20.⁶ Gal. v. 12.

Instead of novelty being any recommendation to a doctrine, ought to be the very contrary. Is it to be supposed that the wise and good Governor of affairs, whose eye is on his church incessantly, and who is glorified by her "walking in the light," would permit her to remain in ignorance of the truth, until *this* period of the world? No idea could well be more dishonourable towards him, or more the reverse of the fact. "He came a light into the world, that they who believe in him should not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

'The sciences and the arts being human inventions, and therefore not only finite, but imperfect, will allow of new discoveries; and every innovation is commonly an improvement, or by experiment it is soon rejected; but we make no scruple to say, that novelty in religion is needless, dangerous, delusive.'¹

The very character of the age, in respect of theology, should render these novelties questionable. It is generally admitted to be a meagre age. The human mind, in the department of divinity, resembles a river that has overflowed its banks; it has broken from its proper bounds—consequently its information is, for the most part, shallow: nor will it ever be profound again, until it returns to the ancient channel. Another thing that renders these speculations suspicious, is the

¹ Rev. WM. JAY.

circumstance that they have usually made most progress among those of more zeal than knowledge ; of more imagination than judgment ; especially females. ‘ Apter they are,’ says the sagacious Hooker, ‘ through the eagerness of their affection, that maketh them, which way soever they take, diligent in drawing their husbands, children, servants, friends, and allies the same way : apter through that natural inclination unto pity, which breedeth in them a greater readiness than in men, to be bountiful towards their preachers, who suffer want : apter through sundry opportunities, which they especially have, to procure encouragements for their brethren : finally, apter through a singular delight which they take, in giving very large and particular intelligence how all near about them stand affected, as concerning the same cause. But be they women, or be they men, if once they have tasted of that cup, let any man of contrary opinion open his mouth to persuade them, they close up their ears, his reasons they weigh not, all is answered with rehearsal of the words of John, “ *We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us :* ” as for the rest, ye are of the world ; for this world’s pomp and vanity it is that ye speak, and the world, whose ye are, heareth you.”¹

Now the evils of these extravagancies are many and serious. They lead astray the unstable : they

¹ ‘ Ecclesiastical Polity,’ Vol. i. p. 150, 151.

distract the simple and the unenlightened; they cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of, and disturb the people of the Lord. For although the elect cannot possibly be deceived so as to continue and perish in error, but even heresies themselves work for their good, by driving them to a closer investigation of Scripture, and greater earnestness in prayer, the result of which is a firmer establishment in the truth than ever, yet this frequent shaking of the tree, tends, meanwhile, grievously to retard its growth, and diminish its fruitfulness. Besides, disorder and perverse disputings are hereby introduced into the church, where God hath enjoined that all things be done decently and in order. Zion, the city of peace, is made a "city of confusion," and the ministry of Christ is brought into contempt.

Many ways in religion, like too great a variety of roads in a country, perplex the pious pilgrim, multiply "the paths of the destroyer;" waste the heritage of the Lord, and deform the fair beauty of his vineyard. He complains himself; "many pastors have destroyed my vineyard."¹

Let, then, schismatics hear their sentence:—"Behold! all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and of the sparks that ye have kindled! This shall ye have of my hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."² "Now the Spirit speaketh ex-

¹ Jer. xli. 10.

² Isaiah l. 11.

pressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”¹ “ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies.” “ But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”²

If then, beloved fellow-christians, we would walk safely and comfortably through this slippery world, let us steadily abide by those grand fundamentals, wherein true Christians, in all ages of the church, have been unanimous : “ but foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.” Let us walk by the same rule ; let us mind the same thing. Let us walk in the beaten road of the church ; “ by the footsteps of the flock.” “ Thus saith the LORD, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein ; and ye shall find rest for your souls.”³

“ If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is *proud*, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and des-

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 1.² Gal. i. 7—9 ; v. 7—10.³ Jer. vi. 16.

titute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself." 'We cannot,' says a late divine, 'so much as approach to truth, but under the conduct of humility. But this is not all: for such is the nature of truth, that after we have embraced it, we cannot give it a fixed entertainment, nor even be secure of not starting from it again, unless we continue under the same influence of humility. For truth, though it want not beauty, yet it is plain and simple, uniform and always alike. Its first and strictest obligation to all its followers, is, that advice of the apostle, "To be of the same mind, to walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing." So that he who will fix upon truth, must necessarily be humble in this respect,—he must content himself to think as others do; to agree with the vulgar notion; and to go in the common track. Truth cannot put on those various modes and shapes that please the levity of human affections. Truth cannot start any thing novel and strange, to take the multitude, who admire nothing so much as monsters. Truth can make no room for the pleasure of singularity; none for the love of contradicting; none for the glory of heading, or the interest of siding with a sect. All these are the rights and privileges of error; inso-much that it is impossible for a man, unless he be humble, to resist the temptation of catching at error, though he has truth already in his hand. And to this

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 3—5.

purpose it might easily appear, from the particular history of all errors and heresies, that ever sprung up to the disturbance of the church and the world, that not one of a hundred of them did ever spring from invincible ignorance and want of light, but from affected mistake, and want of humility. Either ambition of greatness, or the thirst of glory, or impatience of a defeat, or some other designing intrigue of human pride, will appear to have been at the bottom of every dissention.¹

I would only intimate further, in connection with the foregoing particulars, that a very effectual mean of promoting good fellowship among all true Christians would be RELIGIOUS INTERCOURSE. This tends to remove many prejudices and misconceptions; to polish asperities, and to rectify and mellow opinions. Many questionable tenets, attributed to particular denominations, are, when the truth comes to be known, found to have been either attributed to them falsely, or else to be held in conjunction with such guards and fences, as materially tend to obviate their otherwise dangerous character.

Besides, Christian converse provides a valuable source of spiritual comfort and edification.² Like coals on a hearth, which, left to themselves, quickly expire, but gathered into a mass, mutually ignite, and increase the intensity of the fire, the sparks of piety, thus brought to a focus, in spiritual com-

¹ Dean Young.

² See 1 Thess. v. 11.

munion, augment the aggregate ardour of devotion among all those engaged in it. "If two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?"¹

In conversation a Christian's best thoughts and reflections are elicited. He bringeth out of his treasure things new and old. His mind becomes warmed and animated, like a wheel in motion; and where two or three are gathered together in his name, the Lord Jesus is in the midst of them, opening the scriptures unto them, as He did to the two disciples whom he found conversing about him, on the way to Emmaus; so that their hearts burn within them, and they find it good for them to be there. Their minds 'bubble up' with spiritual sentiments. Each declares what the LORD hath done for his soul; each comforts his neighbour with the comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted of GOD. And thus they "magnify his name together;" every individual present being enriched with the general experience of the party. This is indeed 'the feast of reason, and the flow of soul;' compared with which, all the assemblies and festivities of the world are flat, stale, and unprofitable. 'Ah! how lovely, how sweet, and desirable is it to live in the communion of such saints!'²

Such pious conference is frequently recommended in holy writ. Many assertions also are made of its

¹ Ecclesiastes iv. 11.

² FLAVEL.

utility: as, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." "The lips of the righteous feed many." "A word spoken in season, how good it is!"—The wicked, by "evil communications," strengthen and embolden one another in wickedness. Why may not the righteous by edifying conversation strengthen and confirm each other in rectitude? "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Jonathan strengthened David's hands in God. And accordingly, the Saviour sent forth his disciples "two and two."¹

St. Paul, when he had met the brethren on his way to the imperial city, thanked God, and took courage. Our Saviour sent forth his disciples, two by two, doubtless for this, among other reasons, that they might mutually cheer and encourage each other. Even the heroic Luther confessed, that he had often felt himself most sensibly raised and helped by a single word from a brother, who thought himself very much his inferior. 'The word of a brother,' he says, 'pronounced from holy scripture in a time of need, carries an inconceivable weight with it. The Holy Spirit accompanies it, and by it moves and animates the hearts of his people, as their circumstances require. Thus Timothy, and Titus, and Epaphroditus, and the brethren who met St. Paul from Rome, cheered his spirit, how-

¹ Luke x. 1.

ever much they might be inferior to him in learning and skill in the word of God. The greatest saints have their times of weakness, when others are stronger than they.’¹

Christian converse, advisable at all times, when conducted according to the oracles of God, and under a sense of his presence, is particularly so in times of trouble. The prophet Malachi, describing a very ungodly generation, who said that “it was in vain to serve God, and called the proud happy, and they that worked wickedness were set up, and they that tempted God were even delivered;” (the reader will judge how far the features of that time resemble those of the present) proceeds—“Then,” even in that atheistical age, “they that feared the Lord,” (faithful among the faithless) “spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.”²

¹ REV. JOHN SCOTT'S Church History.—LUTHER.

² Malachi iii. 16, 17.

LECTURE V.

ON DOING GOOD AND PRAYER.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

LET the people of CHRIST in these times, following the steps of their adorable Master, be diligent in "doing good." There has certainly been a considerable activity, in promoting the causes of piety and philanthropy, exerted for years past. Let this activity be increased. Let us be always abounding in the work of the Lord, whose service is our highest honour. The time is short. The night cometh, when no man can work. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men; especially unto them that are of the household of faith: and others let us save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."

Let no man say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" That was the insolent answer of a fratricide. As every man hath received the gift, even so let him minister the same, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God. It is rightly observed by Bishop Hall, that 'God never allowed any man to do nothing,' that 'no blood can privilege idleness.'

Nay, idleness was not permitted even in Paradise.¹ Had it been, Adam would not have been happy : for his faculties would not have found their appropriate employment, nor would his mind have been at rest, while he was not glorifying GOD.

Much less is idleness allowed at present. We are now to "eat our bread in the sweat of our face." "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat," is the apostolic command. "Six days shalt thou labour." It is as much our duty to work during the six days, as to rest upon the seventh.²

Our talents are entrusted us to trade with. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal."³ Have we been savingly illuminated ourselves? Then, like the Romans in their torch-race, let us pass along the celestial flame, till it irradiate the world. So doing, we shall not lose what we communicate; but rather receive more—"for, unto every one that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have."

The disciples of old, when they attained to know the Lord, hastened to make him known to their

¹ Gen. ii. 15.

² 'Under the law, God rejected the snail and the ass, Lev. xi. 30. Ex. xiii. 13. and under the Gospel, he allows no sluggish or lazy professor. 1 Tim. v. 8.'—FLAVEL.

³ 'Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not.'—SHAKESPEARE.

brethren. Let us do likewise. Are we converted ? Let us strengthen our brethren. It should be our ruling desire, our predominant ambition, to make our children, our servants, our neighbours, our dependants, and all with whom we come into contact, acquainted with Him, whom to know is life eternal. We should burn to proclaim him with our lips, and to recommend him with our lives : like the pious patriarch, who, while he “preached righteousness,” evidenced his sincerity by sedulously building his ark. How indefatigable are the apostles of error ! They compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and sleep not, unless they have done mischief. Should we be less zealous in propagating truth ? Shall Satan prove greater in the world than Christ in the godly ! O, let it not be ! Let us not prison the truth in unrighteousness, like a precious scent hermetically sealed ; but let its spices flow forth, as “a sweet savour of Christ,” that so, all around may be delighted with the odour, and allured to the Redeemer. “Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.”¹

Christian—meditate on all the divine mercies. Consider how great things God hath done for thee. Realize especially the fact of the Lord Jesus dying for *thee*—thee individually, and bringing thee out of darkness into his marvellous light ; and, while

¹ Canticles i. 3.

thou art thus musing, the fire will be kindled—"the love of Christ will constrain thee to let thy light so shine before men, that they, seeing thy good works, may glorify thy Father which is in heaven."

It is a time for energy and self-denial. It is a time for strenuous and unwearied exertion. It is a time for every one to be at his post, faithfully fulfilling his allotted province. "The devil is come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." If then, we strain not every nerve—between false religion on the one hand, and irreligion on the other, we shall be either clean swallowed up, or driven from the land. 'The men of Issachar are praised for their understanding of the times; but it is added, "they knew what Israel ought to do:" and what their hands found to do, they did it with all their might.'¹

Let those then, who value the Divine glory, or the good of their fellow-creatures, their own comfort, or their own safety, be up and doing. Let them not only labour in works of personal righteousness, but also contribute to the utmost of their ability, to extend evangelical knowledge at home and abroad. "Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of our times."¹ No other remedy can meet the exigence. Every other expedient has been tried in vain. The world still groans under a sense of its wretchedness, and complains, "my wound is incurable." The Bible is the only

¹ Dr. M'CRIE.

² Isaiah xxxiii. 6.

book "the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations." No other balsam goes deep enough—even to the root of the disease in the human heart. All our evils emanate from innate depravity: therefore, if ever we would heal the waters, we must first pour salt into the spring.

Much is it to be lamented, that we saw not this sooner. How different, in all probability, would be the state of things at present. God's word would not have returned unto him void. Let us then redouble our diligence for the future; redeeming the time, for the days are indeed evil. Let infant schools, and Sabbath schools, and all seminaries for biblical instruction, be worked to their greatest attainable point of efficiency; and their number multiplied. Let places for preaching the gospel continue to be erected, and pastors of tried zeal, ability, and piety, be appointed to them, and supported. In short, whatever our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might, seeing there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither we are going.

If the wealthy be but self-denying—if they resolve to retrench mere superfluities—all that is requisite may be accomplished, without their sacrificing any essential comfort. This is what the Lord imperatively requires of them: and if they refuse it, they may lose every thing in this life, and be condemned in the next:—besides "He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad."

The very vitals of our holy religion are in

jeopardy. Every thing pure, lovely, and of good report is in jeopardy; so that interest, benevolence, piety, and the general weal of our nation, unite, as with the voice of so many thunders, in calling upon us to do our duty. The time is arrived, when persons must really choose whom they will serve. The crisis demands decision. The call is now emphatically sounded forth by the posture of affairs, "Who is on the Lord's side?" "Who will take part with him against the evil doers?" And woe unto him, whosoever he be, that comes not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

'He who plants his foot upon neutral ground, will select just the hottest place in the battle, and receive the fire from both sides. If any man, however, is smitten with fear, let him retreat. If any man is faint-hearted, let him draw back. If any man tremble at his proportion of the charge for evangelizing the whole world, let him depart. If any man is alarmed at the noise which precedes the last conflict, let him hide himself with his talent in the earth. But let all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and wait for his appearing in glory, give themselves anew to his service, and break the earthen vessel, and lift up their light and shout, "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" and the victory, and more than the victory, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High God.'¹

¹ DR. BEECHER.

But to active personal exertion must be added fervent and unceasing SUPPLICATION. Prayer without exertion is fanaticism ; exertion without prayer is presumption. Whoever may plant, God alone can give the increase. And for this He will be entreated. He will give his Holy Spirit unto them that *ask* him. Prayer and activity are a two-fold cord, that through Christ will infallibly draw down a blessing. While Joshua with his chosen warriors fight, and Moses, Aaron, and Hur intercede, Amalek is discomfited. ¹

The duty of intercessory prayer is repeatedly inculcated in our heavenly directory. "Seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the LORD for it : for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace." ² "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." ³ Now each of these and of similar precepts implies a promise, that the blessing asked shall be received. Were not God a hearer of prayer, a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, he would not so often enjoin the duty. He hath not said to the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye me in vain." ⁴

¹ Exodus xvii. 8—13.

³ 1 Tim. 1—4.

² Jeremiah xxix. 7.

⁴ Isaiah xlv. 19.

Several instances of the efficacy of intercessory prayer are afforded for our encouragement, in holy writ. The preservation of Sodom would have been conceded to the intercession of Abraham—the first prayer on record in the Bible—had there been so many as five righteous persons found therein. How were the Israelites saved from imminent utter destruction at the deprecation of Moses.¹ Again, how did the Lord hearken to the pleadings of Daniel and his other children, when all the astrologers and sages of Chaldea were doomed to immediate death by the tyrant dreamer. Other instances of a similar description might be easily adduced. Elias prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

Nor let it be objected, that all these were eminently holy persons ; we grant that they were. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture, with the very view of obviating our discouragement on that account ? “They were men of like passions with ourselves.” We need not, then, be disheartened by any feeling of demerit. Nay, the deeper that feeling is, the more likely are we to prevail with God. He hath respect unto the humble. The lower the arrow is drawn, the higher it shoots heaven-wards. The answer of peace is in no case

¹ Exodus xxxii. 10—14.

granted on account of the mere merits of man; but on account of the merits of man's Redeemer. To this only ground for expecting a blessing,¹ every believer has an equal claim; so that the prayer of faith has altogether the same efficacy now, that ever it had. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."² *How* much the apostle does not intimate; as if he were afraid of affixing any limit. Christians, then, "be not faithless, but believing." Take with you words, and turn unto the LORD; say unto him, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips."

And this text, by the way, teaches us what should be primarily prayed for: namely, the taking away of iniquity. 'When God threatens judgments,' says an eminent prelate, 'we in our conversion unto him should pray against sins. Our eye of sorrow should be more upon that which dishonours him, than upon that which afflicts ourselves; more upon that which is contrary to his image, than upon that which is contrary to our own nature; more upon that which defiles, than upon that which pains us. Pharaoh cares for nothing but the removal of death: Simon Magus for nothing but to have perdition and the gall of bitterness kept from him. But good men, like

¹ 2 Cor. i. 20.

² James v. 16. Or, as the original has perhaps been better rendered, 'the prayer of a righteous man, wrought in his heart by the energy of the Spirit, (*ἐνεργουμένη*) is of great efficacy.'—Dr. DODDRIIDGE. The present reading appears tautological.

wise physicians, cure the disease at the root, as Elisha did the waters by putting salt into the spring head. The angel was smiting the people with a plague,—David betakes himself to the right remedy,—I have sinned, I have done wickedly: he goes not to the physicians, but to the altar to make atonement for sin; and so the plague was stayed. Destruction was threatened against Israel for their craft, their murmurings, their rebellions; Moses stands in the gap to divert it. But how doth he do it? Surely by praying against their sins; O this people have sinned a great sin, O that thou wouldest forgive them!—Complaining in trouble is the work of a man; but repenting is the work of a Christian.'

' Further; this teaches us how to pray against sin. It must be against all, and in all respects. In the Hebrew text, there is an unusual kind of transposition of the words. The word 'all' is first. Methinks, it doth intimate an intentness of the church upon that very point, to have, if it were possible, all taken away at the very first. If there be one leak in a ship, one gap in a wall, one gate in a city unprovided for, it is enough to sink a ship, to drown a country, to betray a city. One little boy thrust in at a window, can unlock the door for all the rest of the thieves. It was but one Jonah that raised a tempest, but one Achan that troubled a camp; and one sin generally unrepented of, were enough to undo a kingdom. This then we must first and principally remember—to set ourselves

against all sin. In confession none to be dissembled, in supplication none to be excepted, in conversion none to be reserved : never give over so long as any is left.'¹ To aid us in this gracious work of intercession, many other beautiful forms of sound words are supplied us in scripture : forms, which being given us by the Lord himself, may well be supposed to possess a peculiar prevalency with him. He fills our mouths with arguments. Let the reader, consult, for instance, the seventy-ninth Psalm ; Daniel ix. 5—20 ; Joel ii. 12—17. The Church of England also, in her admirably rich and comprehensive Liturgy, affords a beautiful specimen of intercessory supplication. I allude particularly to that latter portion of her Litany, commencing with the prayer, ' O GOD, merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart,' &c. and ending with the prayer for the Parliament.

Perhaps it is one especial way, whereby the gracious Disposer of events, whose custom it is to educe eventual good out of immediate evil, may cause the artifices of Satan and satanical men to issue in the Divine glory and the church's good, that the imminent peril which now menaces this nation from the false friends of Christianity on the one hand, and its avowed, open enemies on the other, may stimulate the pious to redoubled exertion and earnestness in intercession for the country, and for that truth, which is the country's safe-guard. And

¹ Bishop REYNOLDS on Hosea xiv. Sermon I. Sect. 7, and 10.

who can compute how far the vehement wind of united faithful pleading with God may avail in blowing aside the heavy cloud of wrath, which appears impending over us?

Were the people of Jehovah once to "restrain prayer" before Him, on the country's behalf, it would questionless be equivalent to the country's death-warrant, signed and sealed in heaven itself; ¹ surely, however, so long as they have grace given them to continue to lift up a cry for her, we may say of the nation, as the pious old bishop said to the prayerful mother of St. Augustine, 'It is not possible that the object of such tears can perish.'

Sinister as the aspect of the times is, there are yet several bright features which throw a more favourable expression over their face, inspiring a hope, even against hope, that glory may still dwell in the land. For instance, are not the checks which intemperance and Sabbath-breaking and other sins are receiving, by means of the societies instituted for their abolition,—as also the cessation of slavery in our colonies, good indications? The various churches, too, have, it is generally avowed, experienced a spiritual revival, that is as 'life from the dead.' What better token could there be for the commonwealth than this? For, when the dews of divine grace begin to descend upon the high places of society, may not a supply be expected speedily to reach and renovate the valleys?

¹ See Exodus xxxii. 10. Jeremiah vii. 16; xl. 14; and xiv. 11, 12.

This has already been experienced. There is, undeniably, a much greater appreciation of religion,—however short it may still fall of what there ought to be,—than existed half a century since. Though Popery and Unitarianism, and other kindred modifications of error, may be making proselytes, yet the Lord likewise adds to his church daily such as shall be saved.¹ The church gains by those very departures from her pale. For, in truth, they never were her's indeed ; else, as St. John says, “ they would no doubt have continued with us ; ” they were “ spots in our feasts of charity ; ” incumbrances, not acquisitions ; so that, vital Christianity is affected by their withdrawal, only as a tree is affected by the lopping off of its dead branches. The very *heresies* which characterize the age are a promising symptom : for they may be the mere effect of the powerful alterative of Divine truth, working energetically in the Christian body, and throwing out the disease upon the surface. The number of the godly is altogether greatly increased ; and there are doubtless many thousands in the empire, especially in Ireland, more than *man* knoweth of, who have not received the mark of the beast upon their foreheads. There are multitudes of the Lord's disciples, “ but secretly ” for fear of persecution.

¹ ‘ Protestants, as a body, are far more awakened than they were. They begin to value their religion, in proportion as they see that it is in danger. The hearts of many are weaning from the world, because its glory, even such as it had, is departed from it. Popery and infidelity are making common cause ; and the natural effect has been, a closer identification of Protestantism and faith.’—WOODWARD.

Nor let me omit to mention, as another pleasing symptom, the healthful political reaction that appears to be progressing in the public mind. The tide of popular sentiment, that lately set so strong in the direction of revolution and democracy, appears to be rapidly turning. Britain, we would fain hope, is yet sound at the core.

It is another notable characteristic of the age, that almost all subjects are now investigated with greater accuracy than they were. Intellect is awake. The reign of prejudice seems fast expiring. Matters are no longer taken upon mere hearsay, but scrutinized and judged of, as they ought to be, by their own intrinsic merits. The revival of religion is diffusing a salutary moral and mental influence through the community. Surely this state of things looks auspicious for Christianity; which, the more it is examined in a spirit of fairness and candour, must ever appear the more deserving of all acceptation. Infidels, in general, are infidels only because they have never taken the trouble to give revelation a fair inquiry. They condemn it without trial: without hearing what it has to say in its defence. As Bishop NEWTON says, 'They are only pretenders to learning and knowledge, who are patrons of infidelity.'

Again: there never was a time, perhaps, when the gospel was so fully and faithfully preached in these kingdoms, as it is at present.¹ "The LORD

¹ It appears from the second Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, that, within the last twenty years, accommodation and pastoralship have been provided in Great Britain for 600,000 souls.

hath given the word ; great is the company of those that publish it." And will their preaching be in vain ? No: nor has it been, as the increasing multitude of the pious evinces.¹

Once more : there never was a period when the word of the Lord was so precious as it is in these days. The scriptures are disseminated in all shapes and sizes ; with all helps and appliances ; with every imaginable variety of attractive illustration. They are daily searched by the serious with prayer and a growing avidity ; and made, as they deserve to be, the final referee and arbiter, in all cases of disputation. The worldly themselves appear growing weary and distracted with the conflicting opinions of man, and now at length begin to inquire, " What saith the LORD ? " What could be a better omen than this ? What a change, since the time when the sentences of Peter Lombard² were held in higher estimation in our universities, than the inspired volume ! This increased appreciation and study of the scriptures affords a substantial basis for comfort and encouragement. For although the fruit may not immediately appear in that full luxuriance which were to be wished, and perhaps hoped for, yet we may be satisfied the Lord hath not put it into the hearts of his people, to make such efforts in his cause in vain. No : " light is

¹ See Note XVII.

² A book composed ' principally from the fathers, designed to fortify religious faith with the aid of scholastic metaphysics. It was intended to form a complete body of divinity, and was the theological wonder of the middle ages.'—See *LE BAS's Life of WICKLIFF*. P. 98.

sown for the righteous." The seed may lie dormant even for years; still it is an "incorruptible seed;" it shall not perish, but revive as the corn, and bring forth its harvest, although it be after many days. The period is rapidly approaching, when God will cause the precious deposit to expand in the hearts of mighty multitudes, and such an energetic moral resurrection ensue, as shall astonish and confound the whole herd of infidels and scorers. Thus, while the armies of Israel are encompassing the walls of Jericho, blowing the gospel trumpet, the church is advancing with a steady, but irresistible progress toward her eventual triumph. The wall of Zion is built in troublous times. By means of preaching, scriptural schools, scripture readers, religious books, tracts, and other similar channels, the healing waters of salvation have been dispensed extensively over the land, and there has accordingly been created an under-current of godliness, flowing unregarded by the world, which shall, we trust, gradually undermine the foundations of the strong-holds of darkness, and burst forth and overflow the realm with righteousness.

How active have the godly been, not only in endeavouring to propagate the gospel at home, but moreover in despatching it to heathen lands. Hardly a ship leaves our shores for foreign ports, but bears with it either a missionary or a supply of the Scriptures. We observe also, that the amount subscribed to the various Missionary Societies has on the whole, for years past, been gradually

increasing.¹ Thus, "there are a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." There is in the kingdom a holy seed, on whose behoof the Lord may say, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it. The righteous are the salt of the earth ; and those in this country may haply yet be instrumental in saving it from corruption. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. He sometimes permits affairs to proceed to very desperate extremities, to show us the wickedness of man, and to force us to place our confidence exclusively in Him. We are naturally proud and self-sufficient. We lean upon any reed, in preference to the arm of Omnipotence. We are full, and reign as kings without Him. Then he allows us to go on, toiling in rowing upon the dark and troubled waters, till we are wearied in the greatness of our way, and at our wits' end. Then, when we betake ourselves to prayer, and get us to our God right humbly ; and are feelingly persuaded of our own utter insufficiency, and disposed to render Him all the honour in the event of our preservation, the Lord cometh out of his place, walking upon the waves, and brings us into the desired haven. How forlorn, to all human consideration, was the position of the Israelites on their Exodus from the land of bond-

¹ In the year 1823, all the religious societies together raised £367,000. In 1827 the sum was £502,000

1832 604,000

1834 680,000

1835 778,000

From Rev. E. BICKERSTETH, on 'the Progress of Popery.'

age. With the sea before them, and the exasperated Egyptians behind, and the high mountains circling them on either side, they seemed completely enclosed as in a trap. Yet this very dilemma proved but the preparation for their signal deliverance, and the no less signal overthrow of their infatuated pursuers. 'That sea, which became a new and living way consecrated for the tribes of the Lord, was to prove the bed of death to Pharaoh and his hosts.'¹

Again, how desperate was the condition of the Jews in the time of Esther. The sentence for their utter extermination had gone forth. Every thing was arranged ; the day fixed, and to all appearance they were as dead men. But in the very crisis of their peril JEHOVAH interposed, and caused the destruction, intended for them, to reverberate upon the heads of their enemies. In like manner may the same Lord also deliver us, for his mercy endureth for ever. There are junctures, openings, opportunities in the worst circumstances of a country, that, if but properly seized and improved, may lead to its deliverance. And oh ! did we only avail ourselves of the present breathing-time, were Christians and the more virtuous portion of the community but true to their God and themselves, far as we have rushed toward the precipice of ruin, our eventual fall might yet be averted. The Lord is ever extremely reluctant to discard a nation that

¹ MORRISON'S 'Key to the First Four Books of Moses.'

has once been in covenant with him, as our's has been. He hates putting away. Thus Daniel pleaded with him as a most prevailing consideration, "O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people *are called by thy name.*"¹ And upon similar grounds did Moses and Asaph² intercede with God for the same nation. Yea, how doth the Lord himself lament and yearn over Israel, saying in the very sweetest accents of mercy, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? (two of the devoted cities of the plain.) Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together."³ And so may the same gracious Being, ever slow to punish, be debating with himself concerning *us*, and saying—How shall I give thee up, Britain? How shall I deliver thee, Ireland? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not destroy Britain; for I am God and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee. Oh, that it may indeed be so!

But let us recollect, God generally works through human instrumentality. Therefore, as we love our country, as we would have a lengthening of our tranquillity, as we would have peace and happi-

¹ Daniel ix. 19.

² See Psalm lxxix.

³ Hosea xi. 8, 9.

ness, truth and justice, religion and piety, established among us for all generations, let us do our utmost, by our example, our exertions, our contributions, to advance the cause of evangelical illumination throughout the empire. Let us be constantly planning for God : considering how we may most profitably employ our time, strength, and all our talents. And while we this do, let our prayer be that of the prophet, " O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known ; in wrath remember mercy." ¹

I conclude this Lecture with the following appropriate and impressive remarks of the late illustrious Mr. WILBERFORCE. ' We bear upon us but too plainly the marks of a declining empire. Who can say, but that the Governor of the universe, who declares himself to be a God who hears the prayers of his servants, may, in answer to their intercessions, for a while avert our ruin, and continue to us the fulness of those temporal blessings, which in such abundant measure we have hitherto enjoyed? Men of the world, indeed, however they may admit the natural operation of natural causes, and may therefore confess the effects of religion and morality in promoting the well-being of the community, may yet, according to their humour, with a smile of complacent pity, or a sneer of supercilious contempt, read of the service which real Christians may render to their country, by

¹ Habakkuk lli. 2.

conciliating the favour, and calling down the blessing of Providence. It may appear in their eyes an instance of the same superstitious weakness, as that which prompts the terrified inhabitant of Sicily to bring forth the image of his tutelar saint, in order to stop the destructive ravages of Etna. We are, however, sure, if we believe the Scripture, that God will be disposed to favour the nation to which his servants belong; and that, in fact, such as they have often been the unknown and unhonoured instruments of drawing down on their country the blessings of safety and prosperity.

‘ But it would be an instance in myself of that very false shame, which I have condemned in others, if I were not boldly to avow my firm persuasion, that to the decline of religion and morality our national difficulties must, both directly and indirectly, be chiefly ascribed; and that my only solid hopes for the well-being of my country depend not so much on her fleets and armies, not so much on the wisdom of her rulers, or the spirit of her people, as on the persuasion, that she still contains many, who, in a degenerate age love and obey the Gospel of Christ; on the humble trust that the intercession of these may still be prevalent; that for the sake of these, Heaven may still look upon us with an eye of favour.¹

¹ See View of Practical Christianity. Ch. VI. Sect IV.

LECTURE VI.

THE BELIEVER'S PRIVILEGE.

“ But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice : let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them.”—PSALM V. 11.

WHILE Christians act in accordance with the directions of the inspired word,—while they live in the practice of habitual penitence and faith,—exert themselves for the glory of CHRIST, and cultivate a habit of prayer and intercession, it is their high privilege to rest and repose their minds on Him, with the most imperturbable security. “ For the eyes of the LORD are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers ; but the face of the LORD is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ? But and if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye ; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.”¹ ‘ Behave towards him continually with that reverence, with that dutiful and obedient regard, which his unrivalled perfections and glories demand.’²

A proper, filial fear of GOD will annihilate the

¹ 1 Peter iii. 12—15.

² Dr. DODDRIDGE’S Expositor.

fear of man, even as the light of the sun extinguishes a common fire. For in the fear of the LORD is strong confidence ; and thus is that enigma solved, " happy is the man that feareth alway."¹ Whatsoever befalls, " it shall be well with the righteous."² " Let not *your* heart be troubled," said Christ to his disciples. He is with them always, even unto the end of the world. And " who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."³

' To our own safety, our own sedulity is required. And then blessed for ever and ever be that mother's child, whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake, the pillars of the world may tremble under us, the countenance of the heaven may be appalled, the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory ; but concerning the man that trusted in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable so much as to singe a hair of his head ; if lions, beasts ravenous by nature, and keen with hunger, being set to devour,

¹ Proverbs xxviii. 14.² Isaiah lxi. 10.³ Romans viii. 35-39.

have as it were religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man ; what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God to him.'¹

Be still then, believer, and know that he is GOD. That one monosyllable includes everything—wisdom, power, goodness, faithfulness, tenderness infinite : so that we may boldly say, “ The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” He never intended that his people should walk in sadness, and perplexity, and trepidation ; but the very reverse. He would have them walking in the light of his countenance, children of light, rejoicing always in Him. Happy himself, he takes pleasure in the felicity of his people. He commands them to be careful for nothing, but in *every* thing to cast *all* their care upon Him, because that He careth for them. He enjoins them to let his peace continually keep their hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus. God's people were commanded to rejoice in him under the law ;² how much more are they bound to do so, under the far more clear and glorious dispensation of the Gospel.

It may not be amiss, however, that we familiarize our minds with the idea of possible persecutions. This, should they not be ordained of God, will never occasion them ; and in case they come, will

¹ HOOKER, vol. III. p. 528.

² Psalm cxlix. 2.

render them much less formidable. Familiarity with danger induces contempt for it : as we see exemplified in soldiers and seamen. Accordingly St. Peter thus exhorts us ; “ Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you ; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” ¹

We should learn to think lightly of mere personal suffering. The Author of our being can either alleviate the sense of pain ; or, which were nearly the same thing, enable us to endure it with all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. “ As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.” ² Nay, this were the higher favour. “ Most gladly, therefore,” says St. Paul, “ will I rather glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake ; for when I am weak, then am I strong.” ‘ It would be a great thing,’ says the pious Mr. HOWE, ‘ if persons would admit the conviction of this, (and there is not a plainer thing in the world) that patience is better than immunity

¹ 1 Peter iv. 12, 13.

² 2 Cor. i. 5. ‘ If your Lord call you to suffering, be not dismayed ; there shall be a new allowance of the king for you when you come to it. One of the softest pillows Christ hath, is laid under his witnesses’ heads.’—RUTHERFORD’S Letters.

from suffering : that great and noble effort of the Spirit of God upon the soul, whereby it is brought into an entire possession of itself ! Is that to be compared with a little advantage that only my flesh and outward man is capable of ?' ¹

Bodily suffering, then, is by no means so much to be dreaded as it generally is. Some of the seasons of the greatest enjoyment experienced by the godly have been those of external trial. The Apostles, after they had been beaten, by order of the Jewish council, rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. They accounted suffering for his sake a peculiar favour. "Unto you it is *given* in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake." ² And when Paul and Silas were thrust into the inner prison in a pagan town, and their feet were made fast in the stocks, they sang praises to God at midnight, so loud as to make the entire prison to resound. And in brief, their account of themselves is, that "though sorrowful, they were always rejoicing !" ³

I have read of a martyr even complaining on being taken down from a cross whereon he had been hanging in intense bodily agony ; so superabundant was the spiritual 'consolation,' with which he was favoured. Once let us, through Divine grace, which can enable us to do or to endure anything, overcome the apprehension of

¹ Note XVIII.

² Philippians i. 29.

³ 2 Cor. vi. 10.

corporeal pain, and then we may bid the world and the devil defiance. The worst that they can do is to kill the body ; and we owe God a death at all events,—they cannot touch the soul. That is hid with Christ in GOD—a costly jewel in a secure fortress. And if our enemies put us to death, they do in effect confer on us a benefit, (though that extenuates not their guilt,—they mean not so :) for if we are believers, then “ to us to live is Christ, and to die is gain,”—gain unspeakable. “ All things are our’s, whether life or death.” ¹

But while you endeavour thus to arm yourself with a mind prepared against all occurrences, guard also against anxiety ; thereby making ‘ uncertain evils certain vexations ;’ ² overloading to-day with the fear of what may befall on the morrow. “ Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

—‘ Be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils ;
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid.’ ³

There is no one precept more necessary to be observed by a Christian, in order to his comfort, than that of our Saviour.—“ Take no thought for the morrow ; for the morrow shall take care for the things of itself.” Our Lord here does not prohibit a prudent care, but an anxious distracting carefulness ; as the original term imports. ⁴

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.

² Archbishop LEIGHTON.

³ MILTON.

⁴ μεριμνήσητε, from μείρω, to divide.

We are not promised strength adequate to the evil of two days; but of one. "As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." "Give us this day our daily bread." Strive then, Christian, to live a day at a time, and each day in a near view of eternity, so shall you be less solicitous about the passing events of time. Be sober, and watch unto prayer. Cultivate and maintain self-possession and composure of mind. Like the prophet of old,¹ stand upon your watch, and set you upon the tower of observation; serenely contemplating the movements of providence in the present eventful period of the world's history.

Exercise faith in CHRIST. When our Saviour would fortify his followers' minds in the immediate prospect of his removal from them, he gave them this infallible specific—"Ye believe in God; believe also in me." Believe, not only in God absolutely; for that, to creatures stained and incrustated with sin as we are, could possibly administer no comfort: to unholy rebels, "God is a consuming fire." But "believe also in me;" in whom "God is love." Believe that I am about to suffer, as it is written of me, "the just for the unjust," to expiate sin, and that after I am buried and risen again, I shall "ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God;" to sit down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having all power in heaven and in earth; and there

¹ Habakkuk ii. 1.

to reign till I have ultimately triumphed over all your enemies.' Do then as Christ enjoins, Believe in God; and also in him. Look unto Jesus. So did believers of old: "They looked unto him, and were lightened." "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he will sustain thee."

On a cloudy and dark day, when we look only to the immediate atmosphere around us, behold, darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof. But had we then the pinions of an angel, to penetrate the impending canopy of clouds, and soar aloft toward the radiant empyrean, we should descry the sun shining in unclouded splendour, and luxuriate in the warmth and comfort of his beams. Even so, while the mind looks merely to earthly things, it is necessarily oppressed and saddened, seeing little but sin, suffering, and dismay; but when it assumes the wings of faith, and mounts in meditation above 'this visible diurnal sphere,' and all its rolling atmosphere of storm, and sees heaven opened, and the Lord Jesus sitting upon his Father's throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him,—then, rejoiced by the light of his loving countenance, and refreshed by the exhilarating vision, it returns to earth, trampling upon all its insignificant disquietudes. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

How did believers, in the exercise of faith, triumph formerly? For example, how doth David glory in his God: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake at the swelling thereof. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."¹ In like manner did Hezekiah encourage his captains, when besieged by the many thousands of Sennacherib; saying, "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles."² Hear also the noble expression of faith by the prophet Habakkuk: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold; and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the LORD; I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Take one example more: When St. Paul is assured by the Holy Ghost, "that in every city bonds and afflictions awaited him," what is his assertion? An ordinary person would have been

¹ Psalm xli. the favourite of Luther.

² 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8.

utterly overwhelmed by such an announcement. But hear the Apostle's affirmation :—"None of these things move me !" No. "The righteous are bold as a lion." For "thou, LORD, will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee ; because he trusteth in thee." "Surely he shall not be moved for ever : he shall not be afraid of evil tidings ; his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies."

Our want, or at least our weakness, of faith is the cause of all our fears. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ?" Have not the heathen been promised to Christ for his inheritance, "and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession ?" Because he has poured out his soul unto death, will not God divide him a portion with the great, and a spoil with the strong ? Have not the kingdoms of this world been promised to him, and will not God, the God of truth, perform his promise to his own dear Son ? Has not the Saviour engraven his church on the palms of his hands, so that her walls are continually before him ?¹ Are not his people "his jewels."² Does not he that toucheth them, touch the apple of his eye ?³ And is he not made "the head over all things to the church ?"⁴ doing whatsoever pleaseth him, throughout the whole universe ? In fine—is not his glory

¹ Isaiah xlix. 16.

³ Zech. ii. 8. Deut. xxxii. 10.

² Malachi iii. 17.

⁴ Eph. i. 22.

involved in the advancement of them and of his own cause ; and will he not secure his own glory ?

Now, if the Saviour so loves his church, and is at the same time so omnipotent, “ over all, God blessed for ever,”¹ so as to be able to defend, support, and prosper her perpetually, can any creature, visible or invisible, however he may appear to harm her, do so really ? Impossible ! no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper. The gates of hell shall not prevail against her, much less any earthly stratagem. There is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel. We behold ungodly men in great power, and threatening and even aiming to quench the light of the gospel in the land ; and we say, “ If the foundations be destroyed,” the foundations of order and religion, “ what shall the righteous do ? ” Oh, were those wicked persons removed, how would the truth prosper then ! But we forget at such seasons, that those very individuals, though their intentions are far other, actually advantage us. The Lord hath need of them ; they are his instruments ; the sword is in his hand ; yea, his hand itself ;² so that they cannot possibly do any thing against the truth, but for the truth.

And here it will not be irrelevant to remark, that it has been the want of faith in God, and the consequent fear of temporal evils, that have occasioned to this kingdom so much unhappiness, and

¹ Rom. ix. 5.

² Psalm xvii. 14.

threaten to occasion it immeasurably more. These have opened the flood-gates to an inundation of evil, the ultimate extent of whose current no mortal mind can calculate. Had those in authority, looking simply to the law and the testimony, taken the high ground of Christian legislators, they would in all probability have held on their way, and been stronger and stronger. At the least, they would have possessed the all-sustaining comfort of an approving conscience, and the satisfaction arising from the evidence that they had acted as became them. 'Duty is our's, events are the Lord's.' But alas ! for this noble course they lacked the moral courage ; they lacked the faith. Instead of ruling in the fear of the Lord, as they were commanded to do, they ruled in the fear of man, which ever bringeth a snare. Instead of consulting the oracles of God, they consulted the wizard Expediency. And what has been the result ? Has the policy prospered ? No more than it did with Saul, when, through *fear of the people*, he spared Agag and the best of the sheep and the oxen, instead of destroying them utterly, as he was directed ; or, than it prospered with Pilate, who, willing to *please the people*, violated the laws of justice, and his own conscience, and delivered to the Jews the Prince of Life, to be crucified ! O ! that a policy so criminal and disastrous might in future be abandoned ! "Them that honour God, he will honour ; but they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed."

' If to expedience principle must bow ;
 Past, future, shrinking up beneath the incumbent now
 If cowardly concession still must feed
 The thirst for power in men who ne'er concede ;
 If generous loyalty must stand in awe
 Of subtle treason, in his mask of law ;
 Or with bravado insolent and hard,
 Provoking punishment to win reward ;
 If office help the factious to conspire,
 And they, who *should* extinguish, fan the fire—
 Then will the sceptre be a straw, the crown
 Sit loosely like the thistle's crest of down,
 To be blown off at will, by the pow'r that spares it
 In cunning patience, from the head that wears it.'¹

¹ WORDSWORTH. How important and seasonable, at such a time, are the following observations of another experienced writer :—
 ' View again the operation of the system of nominal Christianity under another form, which, disregarding the teaching of Christ, makes UTILITY the grand criterion of moral obligation. The benevolent labours, and the improvements and discoveries which we owe to many authors of this class, makes it the more necessary to point out its unscriptural character. It is the SYSTEM OF HUMAN EXPEDIENCY ; one most extensively and injuriously prevalent at the present day.'—
 ' To infer that what seems to us useful on the whole is thence right to be done, assumes that we adequately and fully know what is useful, and thus assumes in fact that we know infinitely more than our finite faculties can possibly comprehend. The rule is insufficient in cases where there is no positive precept, for it would be gross fallacy to infer a line of duty from a partial view of a few consequences. Much more would it be not merely a fallacy, but a dreadful presumption, to admit such an inferential rule, when opposing clear precepts of God's word.'

' Under the plausible exterior of praising the Divine benevolence, a deity is imagined suited to our carnal nature ; God and his Christ are dethroned ; man's will is invested with sovereign authority, and a mere refined selfishness and a disguised infidelity are established. Unquestionably God has connected man's happiness with obedience ; and godliness in the issue will be found to be of the highest utility ; but making utility the ground of moral obligation is making man's precarious judgment of utility (than which nothing can be more fluctuating and uncertain, or more easily mislead and seduce) the guide of conduct.

God has higher ends in creating us than the mere happiness of

Let us then seek for more faith. Let us not consult with flesh and blood. Let us look less at the things which are seen, and more unto those which are not seen. They are more and mightier, who are with us, than all who are against us. When, at the supplication of the prophet, the eyes of his servant were opened, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.¹ “The LORD reigneth, the earth may be glad thereof; yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.” Let us practise the precept, “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice.” (The precept is repeated, as being at once of difficult observance, and of eminent importance, for the joy of the Lord is our strength.) ‘In nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.’ “Why do the hea-

man; he has formed all things for his own glory, as well as for the final good of those who love him; and many things to our view may be very useful that are very offensive to God, and ultimately very injurious to ourselves. What is the natural effect of this system? Overlooking Christ, to whom *all power in heaven and earth is given*, and his government of the earth, it destroys the noble actings of faith, and leads men to human motives, quite inadequate to produce that self-denying, self-sacrificing, and disinterested conduct which has been most beneficial to the human race. Under this system, the Apostles could never have said *they counted not their lives dear*, and Christianity would never have been propagated; Luther would never have effected the Reformation in Germany, or the martyrs in England sealed our own with their blood; and thus persecutions, oppressions, slavery, the inquisition of the Romanist, and every iniquity may be plausibly covered, even to the most tremendous crime that ever was committed: *It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people*. —REV. E. BICKERSTETH'S Christian Student.

¹ 2 Kings vi. 17.

then rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."

In the event of judgments descending upon the country and upon the world, there appears to be the highest degree of probability, that they will be poured out exclusively on the unconverted. For though, in punishing, the Lord will no doubt commence at his sanctuary—and "judgment begin at the house of God," yet we think it clear and unquestionable, from a comparison of this latter text with the passage in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel, to which it manifestly refers, that they are the false *professors* of religion, possessing a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, who are here intended. We read in the eighth and preceding chapter of Ezekiel, of the shameful abominations and idolatries that were practised in the temple of the Lord ; and here, in the ninth chapter, the man with the writer's ink-horn is directed to go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. Then, the others, the six men with the slaughter

weapons in their hands, were commanded to go after him through the city, and smite unsparingly old and young, but to go not near any man upon whom was the mark.

There is a similar passage in the seventh chapter of the Revelation, where the four angels are represented as holding the four winds of the earth; and another angel ascends from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cries with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The mark or the seal, mentioned in either place, questionless denotes the divine image, impressed on believers by "the Holy Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption." And from both passages it appears evident, that those thus distinguished, will be passed over in the general visitation, even as the Israelites were of old, in the destruction of the first-born throughout the land of Egypt, the type of the destruction of all the enemies of MESSIAH's people. It is far from God to slay the righteous with the wicked.¹ He doth "put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."²

With the above opinion accords that of several eminently pious and learned men. Bishop LOWTH, referring to the afore-cited passage in Ezekiel, observes, 'when the number of such mourners³ is

¹ Gen. xviii. 25.

² Exod. xi. 7.

³ See Ezekiel ix. 4.

not sufficient to divert God's judgments from any nation, they shall at least deliver their own souls. 'The way,' says Bishop REYNOLDS, 'to be safe in times of trouble, is to get the blood of the Lamb upon our doors.'¹ All troubles have their commission and instruction from God, what to do, whither to go, whom to touch, whom to pass over. Be gold, and though the fire come upon you, you shall keep your nature and purity still. Godliness, saith the apostle, hath the promises of this life, and amongst those a special one is, that we shall not be tempted above that we are able:² neither are there indeed any distresses against which there is not a refuge and escape unto some promise or other.'

'In time of calamity, says another old divine, 'God will preserve his fruitful trees; as in Deut. xx. 19. The Israelites were commanded not to destroy them; so though God's judgments come, yet will he take special care of his obedient children.'³

But the opinion, most pertinent and specific of all, is that attributed to Archbishop USHER.

'In the year before Primate Usher died, his chaplain, Dr. Bernard, inquired of him what his opinion was concerning a very great persecution, generally expected by the ablest divines of the reformed churches abroad, to fall upon the church of Christ in the West of Europe, and particularly in the British Islands, of which that learned man, as well as Bishop Bedell, did, many years before, with the greatest confidence predict. Doctor Ber-

¹ Exod. xii. 13, 23.

² 1 Cor. x. 13.

³ From SIMES' Meditations.

nard asked him, whether he believed these predicted times of trial had passed over, or were yet to come? To this he answered, that 'they were, in his opinion, yet to come; and that he did as confidently expect them as he had ever done'—adding, that 'this sad persecution would fall upon all the Protestant Churches in Europe.' His chaplain replied, that he had hoped it might have been passed as to these nations of ours, since he thought that though their inhabitants had been punished much less than they deserved, and that the preceding wars, commencing with the massacre of the Protestants of Ireland, had made far less devastation than wars commonly bring; yet it was to be acknowledged, that many great houses had been burned or left without inhabitants in the course of them; many great families impoverished and undone, and many thousand lives lost; that Ireland and Scotland, as well as England, had drank very deep of the cup of God's anger, even to the overthrow of the government, and the utter desolation of a very great part of them.'

'Here Archbishop Usher turned to Dr. Bernard, and fixing his eyes upon him with that serious, and rather solemn look, which he usually had when he spake God's word, and not his own, and when the power of God seemed to be upon him, and constrain him to speak what could easily be distinguished from his usual manner of speaking, he said thus—'Fool not yourself with any such hopes; for I tell you that all you have yet seen hath been but the

beginning of sorrows, to what is yet to come on the Protestant Churches of Christ, which will, ere long, fall under a sharper persecution than ever yet was upon them. Therefore, (said he) look you may not be found in the outward court, but a worshipper in the temple, and before the altar; for Christ will measure all those who profess his name, and call themselves his people, and the outward worshippers he will leave to be trodden down by the Gentiles.

‘The outward court (he said) is the formal Christian, whose religion lies in the performance of the outward duties of Christianity, without having an inward life and power of faith and love, uniting them with Christ, and those God will leave to be trodden down and swept away by the Gentiles; but the worshippers within the temple and before the altar are those who indeed worship God in spirit and in truth—whose souls are made his temples, and by whom he is honoured and adored in the inmost thoughts of their hearts—who sacrifice their lusts and vile affections, yea even their own wills, to him; and these God will hide in the hollow of his hand and under the shadow of his wings. And there shall be one great difference between this and all the preceding persecutions; for in the former, the most eminent and spiritual ministers and private Christians did generally suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon—but in this last persecution these shall be preserved by God, as a seed, to partake of that glory which shall immediately follow, and come upon the church, as

soon as ever this storm shall be over ; for as it shall be the sharpest, so shall it be the shortest persecution of them all, and shall only take away the gross hypocrites and formal professors, but the true spiritual believers shall be preserved 'till the calamity be over-past.'¹

The writer has made inquiry, and finds that the above remarkable narrative is from an authentic source, as indeed is demonstrated by its own internal evidence.

It may be advanced in contravention of these opinions, that genuine Christians have at other times been persecuted and massacred the most severely of all. This may be true ; but in answer to it we observe—that the former cases, and that about to occur, are by no means similar. Those sufferings of the Lord's people were appointed for 'the trial of their faith,' the purification of their souls, and the demonstration of the celestial origin of Christianity ; in that, like the bush in the desert, it should be so frequently in the fire, yet never consumed. The approaching calamities, however, are not for the church, but for her adversaries. God has ordained his arrows against the persecutors.² He will now contend with them that contend with her, and will save her children.³ It will not be the time of her adversity, but of her avengement, as we read in the sixth chapter of the Revelation ; of the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which

¹ From Belfast Guardian.

² Psalm vii. 13.

³ Isaiah xi. 25.

they held, crying with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and *avenge* our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" It will be the time of JEHOVAH's reckoning with the ungodly for their oppression of his people, and their rejection of his Gospel. In a word, it will be 'the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion;'¹ when the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his *servants*, and his indignation toward his *enemies*.²

At all preceding periods, the gospel had not been preached to the several nations, at least not so extensively; and of course, had not been rejected by them. But now, it *shall* have been, as our Saviour informs us in the thirteenth of St. Mark. Then shall the nations have filled up the measure of their guilt. They shall have added to all their other delinquences this capital and crowning sin of all—neglecting the great salvation, and refusing to have Christ to reign over them. Infidelity, and its almost invariable attendant, insubordination to all authority human and divine, shall have risen to a fearful height. All anti-christian dynasties shall have been abolished. For thus saith the LORD God to every such, "Remove the diadem, and take away the crown; this shall not be the same. Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it to him."³ "Immediately after the

¹ Isaiah xxxiv. 1—8.² Isaiah lxvi. 14.³ Ezekiel xxi. 26, 27.

tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened,"¹—that is, magistracy shall be overborne by universal anarchy: "and the moon shall not give her light,"—that is, the church, the reflection of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shall suffer an eclipse; having fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent. There shall hardly be found faith in the earth. "The stars shall fall from heaven;" that is, according to the interpretation of scripture itself,² the angels or ministers of the several churches shall have been deposed, and prevented from executing their functions. "The teachers shall be removed into a corner,"³ and there will consequently be "a famine of hearing the word of the LORD."⁴ At this terrific juncture, when men's hearts shall be failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; 'when the foundations of society shall have been destroyed; when all the rage of hell shall play its part, the spirits of men let loose, the devils not yet bound, and ready to do their uttermost, when they know their time is short, the very hour and power of darkness; when all things shall conspire to make the church a chaos and place of confusion, when the elements shall be as it were commissioned to fight one another, and the powers of heaven shall shake,'⁵—at this terrific crisis shall the Lord Jesus be revealed for the deliverance of his people, and the signally tremendous

¹ Matt. xxiv. 29.² Rev. i. 20.³ Isaiah xxx. 20.⁴ Amos viii. 11.⁵ HOWE, 'On the Holy Spirit.'

overthrow of his enemies. For the day of vengeance is in his heart, and the year of his redeemed is come; and he looked and there was none to help; and he wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him, and his fury, it upheld him. "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all that come forth of it." This solemn prelude—this universal summons to all sublunary creation—betokens the immense importance of the announcements immediately following: "For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold it shall come down upon Idumea," (the name denoting the adversaries of the church, as the Edomites anciently were) "and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood; it is made fat with fatness; and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the

land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls," (persons both small and great shall be slain as a sacrifice to the Divine justice) "and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion."¹

This same momentous epoch is often indicated in Scripture, (as we have already noticed,) as "THE GREAT DAY OF THE LORD,"—different from the DAY OF FINAL DOOM; and so, to occur *before*, and not *after*, the Millennium: a day, when the "lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted; a day, when they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth; a day, when the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth; and they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and they shall be shut up in the prison:"² a day, in fine, when the heathen shall be awakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there the LORD will judge the heathen round about; multitudes, multitudes, in the valley

¹ Isaiah xxxiv. 1—5. Compare Ezekiel xxxviii. xxxix. and Joel iii. 9—16.

² Isaiah xxiv. 21, 22.

of decision.¹ Yet in this tremendous juncture; this time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,² it is remarkable and striking, how uniformly and invariably deliverance and safety, triumph and joy, are promised to the people of EMMANUEL. We shall adduce some additional texts in exemplification of this.

“The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect toward him.”³ “In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence, and his people shall have a place of refuge.”⁴ “Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he will be for a sanctuary.”⁵ “Behold the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The earth mourneth and fadeth away; the haughty people of the earth do languish. The city of confusion is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. When thus it shall be in the midst

¹ Joel iii. 12—14. Comp. Ezekiel xxxviii. 15, 16. Rev. xvi. 14—16.

² Daniel xxii. 1.

³ 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

⁴ Prov. xvi. 26.

⁵ Isaiah viii. 12—14.

of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. *They* shall lift up their voice; *they* shall sing for the majesty of the LORD; *they* shall cry aloud from the sea.”¹ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh from far, burning with anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire; and his breath as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with a sieve of vanity; and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.² Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty *shall* be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, (his church,) and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am *thy* Saviour, and *thy* Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”³ “Who is this, (the prophet inquires,) that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from

¹ Isaiah xxiv. 1—14.² Ibid. xxx. 27—29.³ Ibid. xlix. 24—26.

Bozrah? (the capital city of Idumea, the type of **Anti-Christ**;) this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? (The personage replies,) "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (The prophet inquires again—) "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" (Answer) "I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of *my redeemed* is come. Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was *their Saviour*."¹ "Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about, for their wickedness is great. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel."² "Thou didst march through the land in thine indignation, thou didst thrash the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth *for the salvation of thy people*; even for salvation with thine anointed."³

All these predictions seem more or less referable

¹ Isaiah xliii. 1—8.

² Joel iii. 12—16. See also Obadiah verses 15—17.

³ Habakkuk iii. 12, 13.

to the same awful period, and it is very observable throughout, that while such unheard-of judgments are denounced against the *unconverted*, salvation is invariably promised to the people of GOD. Let us cite one or two passages from the *New Testament*, of a similar import. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory."² And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; *for your redemption* draweth nigh? Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."³

It would appear, then, to be the purpose of JEHOVAH, to invert the usual order of his provi-

¹ Luke xxi. 25—28.

² The above passage (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.) has doubtless a further and fuller application. There seem to be *three* several comings of Christ, subsequent to his first, indicated in scripture: viz. that at the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. x. 23. Luke xx. 16)—that immediately preceding the Millennium—(to punish the nations for the rejection of his Gospel, and to avenge his Church upon her persecutors)—and that *after* the Millennium, at the final day of judgment. (compare Jude 14, 15, with Rev. xx. 11, 12.) And, questionless, it will require all these comings completely to develop and fulfil the pregnant prophecy considered.

³ Rev. iii. 10.

dence toward his church. For whereas at all previous times the church had sorrow, and the world had joy; now the church shall rejoice, and the world have sorrow. "Thus saith thy LORD, the LORD, and thy God, that pleadeth the cause of his people; Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the *dregs* of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again; but I will put it into the hand of *them that afflict thee*; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over."¹

In the event then, of such a crisis arriving, which assuredly *will* arrive, and sooner perhaps than we expect; ("behold," says Christ, "I come as a thief;"²) what will be the part of the truly pious? This appears an important question. Their duty, then, we think, is very clearly declared in holy Scripture. Their strength will be to sit still; in patience possessing their souls: to remain in their hiding-place, and give themselves to prayer, until the calamities be overpast. "When the wicked arise, men hide themselves."³ "Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time."⁴ "The LORD shall fight for you; and ye shall hold your peace."⁵

But where should they hide themselves? Whether the Most High shall actually provide in

¹ Isaiah li. 22, 23. Comp. Psalm lxxv. 8.

² Prov. xxviii. 28.

⁴ Amos v. 13.

³ Rev. xvi. 15.

⁵ Exodus xvi. 14.

his providence any particular place on earth, as a sanctuary to his people in such an emergency, as He reserved Zoar for Lot in the destruction of Sodom ; and Pella for the Christians in the siege of Jerusalem, is a problem which the writer will not attempt to solve. There seems, indeed, an intimation of the kind in the twelfth chapter of the Revelation—" And to the woman (that is, the church,) were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place ; where she was nourished for a time, and times, and half a time,"¹ (three years and a half,) from the face of the serpent." And some have conceived that AMERICA is the wilderness here intended. But this must be mere conjecture. ' God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.' At all events, CHRIST will be the true hiding-place.² "He shall be for a sanctuary ;" a sanctuary of strength ; " a strong-hold." He is the rock of refuge ; the rock of salvation. " The name of the Lord is a strong tower ;³ the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." The name of the LORD, here,

¹ Compare Rev. xii. 6. Matt. xxiv. 22. Isaiah xxvi. 20.

² Isaiah xxxii. 2. xxiv. 4. viii. 14.

³ All the whole gracious name of God, every title that he hath given himself, every description of honour to himself that he hath owned, is confirmed to us, (to as many as believe,) in Jesus Christ. For as he hath declared to us the whole name of God, John xvii. 6. so not this or that promise of God, but " all the promises of God are in him, yea, and amen." So that as of old every particular promise that God made to the people, served especially for the particular occasion on which it was given, and each name of God was to be rested on, as to that dispensation whereunto it was suited to give

denotes his attributes; and as these all are concentrated in Christ, "the power of God, and the wisdom of God," "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily;"¹ so, CHRIST is that strong tower; and his various excellences and resources constitute the several apartments or *chambers*, into one or another of which his people, according to their immediate exigency, betake themselves. Thus it is enjoined, apparently with a special reference to the very period contemplated,—
 "Come, my people, enter thou into thy *chambers* and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment." &c.²

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, he is my refuge and my fortress—My God, in him will I trust. Because thou hast made the LORD, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee."³

Behold then, believer, what exceeding great and precious promises are thine! We have a strong

relief and confidence, as the name of El-Shaddai* to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the name Jehovah † to Moses and the people; so now, by Jesus Christ, and in him, every particular promise belongs to believers in all their situations; and every name of God whatever is, theirs also, at all times, to rest upon, and put their trust in.—OWEN on Psalm cxxx.

¹ Exodus xxiii. 20, 21.

² Isaiah xxvi. 20, 21.

³ Psalm xci.

* A God all-sufficient.

† A God performing what he had promised—a God perfecting what he had begun.

city: salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks. Only make clear your interest in Christ, and then you establish your title to these promises: for "all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ."¹ Assurance of salvation is of unspeakable importance at all times, but pre-eminently in times of peril. Supposing you have not yet attained to it, but are uncertain whether you are the Lord's or not; and death or danger overtakes you, what would be your support? What would you do in the day of your visitation? Would you not resemble a ship at sea, surprised by a storm, and without an anchor or a star? You would not see your tokens. There would hardly shine a star in the whole firmament of promise, to cheer or guide you in your voyage. Whereas, he who has fled for refuge to the hope that is set before us in the Gospel, has strong consolation. He knows in whom he has believed. He has cast his anchor within the veil, and is persuaded that it will enable him to ride out every tempest. He is assured that God will keep that which he has committed to his care, and that neither height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate him from the rock of his salvation.

'Wouldest thou have comfort in thy misery, says the learned Mr. MEDE, 'wouldest thou have joy in all thy sorrows, wouldest thou find rest in the greatest troubles of thy life; wouldest thou

¹ 2 Cor. i. 20.

entertain death as a messenger of joy, wouldest thou welcome the Lord Jesus at his coming? O labour then to make "thy election sure;" never cease till thou hast gotten the *seal* and earnest of thy salvation; renounce all kinds of peace till thou hast found the peace of conscience; discard all joy till thou feelest the joy of the Holy Ghost.'¹

But, how, (you perhaps ask,) shall you determine whether you *are* in the Lord or not? There are a few tests, afforded in the inspired Record, whereby you may ascertain at once. For example, "They that are Christ's walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit: they have crucified the flesh, with the sinful affections and lusts." Every one that hath a solid hope in Christ, purifieth himself, even as Christ is pure. Is this your practice and experience? Are you denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world? Again—"If ye be led of the Spirit of God, then are ye the sons of God." Are you thus led? Do you yield yourselves up unreservedly to the impulses of that Divine monitor, prompting you to prayer, self-denial, and a life of personal righteousness? Do you take up the cross daily, and follow the Lord? Do you yield yourself unto God, as one that is alive from the dead, and your body as an instrument of righteousness unto God? Is there no holding back? no hoof

¹ 'The Lord intendeth to melt and try this land, and it is high time we were all upon our feet, and falling about to try what claim we have to Christ.'—RUTHERFORD'S Letters.

left in Egypt? Do you hate *every* false way, and endeavour to be perfect, entire, wanting nothing? Do you walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless? Then, then indeed you shall not be ashamed. "For to this end did I write," says the Apostle, "that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things."¹

In brief—"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."² Have you then his Spirit? How shall you determine? By examining whether you bring forth his fruits. What are these? "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Try then by these criteria, whether you be in the faith. And, "forasmuch as the heart is deceitful above all things," do it with prayer to the Lord to assist you in coming to a right decision. The Psalmist himself so prayed.³

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle, not (only) against flesh and blood, but (also) against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹ 2 Cor. ii. 9.

² Romans viii. 9.

³ Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24.

Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of *faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”¹

¹ Note XIX.

LECTURE VII.

THE MILLENNIUM.

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."—REV. xi. 15.

WE now come to contemplate that blessed period, which will follow directly in the train of those great events we have been considering.

In Winter, when the air is cold and the landscape bleak, and all nature in appearance dead—or, in the earlier stages of Spring, when the atmosphere is still ungenial, and storms descend upon the mountains, and desolate the valleys, and thunder along the deep—how cheering and consoling is it to look forward to the glad and glorious season shortly to ensue, when God shall renew the face of the earth, and crown the year with his goodness. Even so, when the territory of the church is yet in a waste and wintry condition, and, comparatively speaking, but few signs of efflorescence appear; but the day is still cloudy, and the love of many still cold, and Satan rages, and iniquity abounds; and the hurricane of persecution darkens the horizon, and howls among the hills and towers of Zion;

O ! how heart-sustaining and refreshing is it to anticipate, with the eye of faith, that illustrious *moral* Summer, when the hurricane shall have swept over, and purified the atmosphere, and the Sun of Righteousness have arisen upon the world, with healing in his wings ! Yes ; the anticipation of such a period is exceedingly encouraging : and accordingly, the church is continually reminded of it in the prophets ; that her faith fail not, nor her heart be cast down, amidst immediate desolations. Thus, in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, God directs his ministers in these beautiful terms : “ Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned : for she hath received of the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.” So again in the thirty-fifth chapter of the same book it is written : “ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing ; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon ; they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.” And with the declaration of these glad tidings the teachers of the people of God were commissioned to solace and establish them :—
“ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not ; behold, your God will come

with vengeance, even God with a recompense ; he will come and save you.”¹

In prosecuting this delightful theme, it may be proper, in the first place, to prove, that such a state of things as that which is designated the **MILLENNIUM** will actually be realized. We have repeated intimations in Scripture of a kingdom which the Lord is establishing upon earth ; for example, in the seventy-second Psalm ; where the Holy Spirit, speaking of **CHRIST**,—for the expressions are infinitely too august to be applied only to Solomon—asserts, “ in his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall kneel before him ; and his enemies shall lick the dust. Yea, all kings shall fall before him ; all nations shall serve him.” To the same purpose it is predicted in Daniel ; after the prophet had been speaking of the four great monarchies that should successively arise in the earth ; namely, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman,—“ In the days of these kings (that is, during the continuance of some of them) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and stand for ever.”²

¹ See also Isaiah lxii. 11. 12.

² Daniel ii. 4

For the establishment of this same supremacy has the Church been ever praying, in the words "thy kingdom come;" and when it shall be established, then shall be accomplished that other glorious prediction:—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."¹

Immediately previous to this wished-for consummation, Satan shall have been bound; for while he continued at large, such a state of things was almost unattainable. But then, the angel shall have descended from heaven, "having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand," and shall have "laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."²

Then will commence that delightful period, so long the desire of all nations, when the sighs and groans and birth-pangs of creation shall issue in a glorious deliverance: when all the baleful brood of error shall be banished into that ignorance and darkness from which they emanated: when over the whole earth there shall be one LORD, and his name one: when Zion shall have all her petitions granted, and all her wrongs redressed: and shall awake and put on her beautiful garments, and shine in the plenitude of her glory.

1. It shall be a period of great PEACE. The warfare of the Church shall have been accom-

¹ Rev. xi. 15.

² Rev. xx. 1-3.

plished. God shall have given her rest from all her enemies round about, and have healed the stroke of her wound. A time of refreshing shall have come from the presence of the Lord : and Jerusalem shall be a quiet habitation, “ where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.” And Jehovah shall extend peace to his children, like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles, like a flowing stream ; and great shall be the peace of his children.

And then shall they sing this song—“ How hath the oppressor ceased ! The golden city ceased ! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. The whole earth is at rest and is quiet ; they break forth into singing.”

Satan being then no longer loose, to instigate the evil passions of men, and those passions themselves being completely subjugated and sanctified by the spirit of grace, “ they will beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

All too shall have complete peace with God : who then, *indeed*, shall have “ reconciled the world unto himself by Jesus Christ ;” and they shall be filled with that peace which passeth understanding. They shall live in perfect peace and amity with each other. Persons of the most dissimilar *natural* tastes and dispositions shall coalesce and dwell together with as perfect harmony and concord, as the different animals did in the ark. “ The wolf shall dwell

with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain."¹

2. It shall be a period of great LIGHT. The volume of prophecy shall then be more fully unrolled. The hand of the Lord, by the evolution of events, shall have greatly withdrawn the veil now suspended over the future. He will "destroy the covering cast over the face of all people, and the veil that is spread over many nations."² The meaning of Scripture on many topics, now uncertain, shall then be declared by the more ample communication of the Spirit of truth. Besides, in consequence of the greater clearness of intellect, resulting from the departure of prejudice and vice, persons shall understand the sacred text far more fully than they do at present. They shall then be more spiritual, and he that is spiritual judgeth all

¹ Isaiah xi. 6—8. It seems no enthusiastic supposition, that this prophecy shall receive, in some measure, even a literal verification. It is a remarkable fact, that according as man becomes civilized, the inferior creatures become gentle. The fall of our species was followed by the ferocity of the brute creation; why may not our recovery be attended by an opposite influence? It will probably affect, more or less, all nature. See Rom. viii. 16—23.

² Isaiah xxv. 7.

things. "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon them, and make them of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD."

In southern latitudes, where the sky is clearer, and the climate more serene, the face of the heavens is much more brilliant than it is with us. So, when the moral and intellectual medium shall have been purified by "the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning," not only will the truths already revealed acquire an additional lustre, but others, at present beclouded, shine forth to the enraptured contemplation.

How dim was the mind of the Jewish church in comparison with ours. Her very prophets did not comprehend the import of their own utterances; "searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."¹ And among all the prophets there arose not a greater than John the Baptist; nevertheless, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, (that is, in the gospel state,) is greater—has much more insight into divine things—than he had. Yet, if *they* were children, compared with us: we are no more, compared with the people of the Millennium. There will be giants in the earth in those days,—giants in intellect; to whom our highest attainments in wisdom and science will seem to have been but puerilities.

¹ 1 Peter i. 11.

They shall have other bards, philosophers, and divines, than ever the world had hitherto witnessed : while all the arts and sciences, and all the abilities of genius, instead of being enlisted on the side of Satan, to veil impurity, adorn crime, and embellish idolatry,—to the delusion and destruction of mankind,—shall be enlisted in the cause of truth and righteousness. “ And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly.” “ The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun ; and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days.”

The knowledge shall not only be vast in respect of extent, but unprecedentedly profound,—like the ocean, at once expansive and deep. For “ the knowledge of the glory of the LORD shall cover the earth, as the waters cover (the cavity of) the sea.” All heresies, those weeds of a shallow age, shall then be unknown. “ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark ;”—that is, it shall not be clear in some places and dark in others of the world ; “ but it shall be one *day*, which shall be known to the LORD, not day nor night ;”¹ the light shall be universal and continual, “ for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.”²

¹ Zech. xiv. 6—9.

² Isaiah lli. 8.

3. It shall be a time of peculiar **HOLINESS**. The vast knowledge that shall then prevail, will be a sanctifying knowledge, not resting in the understanding merely, but renewing the heart. "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." ¹

The paradisaical state shall in a great measure be restored. At least, there shall subsist a much more intimate intercourse between this and the upper world, than hath subsisted since the fall. St. John, describing a state of things even anterior to this, says, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in the temple the ark of the covenant : " ² "to signify," says Dr. Doddridge, "further manifestations of the divine presence. The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and "the LORD of hosts shall dwell in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." ³ Then will the minutest transaction of daily life be enstamped with the impress of sanctity. The commonest action shall be a religious service. "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, **HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD**, and their merchandise and their hire shall be holiness unto the LORD." ⁴ "And I will make, (says God) thy officers peace, and thine

¹ Isaiah iv. 3. ² Rev. xi. 19. ³ Isaiah xxiv. 23. ⁴ Zech. xiv. 20.

extractors righteousness: violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting and destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise."¹

This holiness shall be universal. The will of the Father shall be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven. His people shall be all righteous.² Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit;³ and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.⁴ The triumph of righteousness shall be even more than commensurate with the previous triumph of unrighteousness. Where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound. A flood of iniquity once overflowed the earth; then followed a flood of waters: but now shall come a flood of living waters, that shall rise and increase till they become waters to swim in.⁵ "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the LORD, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him."

4. It shall be a period of great LOVE. We have now considerable light, but alas! comparatively little love; for we are yet in a great degree carnal. But then, the world being converted to GOD, this first-fruit of his Spirit⁶ shall conspicuously abound. He that loveth God shall love his brother also. The seamless robe of Emmanuel shall no longer be torn into shreds and patches by enmities, and divisions. "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah

¹ Isaiah lx. 17, 18. ² Isa. lx. 21. ³ Isa. xxvii. 6. ⁴ Isa. lxi. 10.

⁵ Isa. xlii. 3.

⁶ See Gal. v. 22.

vex Ephraim." No longer shall one say, I am of Paul; and another, I of Apollos; and a third, I of Cephas; but all shall "be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;"¹ and Christians at length shall enjoy the "comfort of love," and experience "how good and joyful a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity."

5. It will be a time of pre-eminent SPIRITUAL PRIVILEGES. In the latter chapters of the prophet Ezekiel, we have a description of a spacious city and temple, and also of certain rites and ceremonies therein to be performed. This prophecy is generally admitted to have reference to the order of things under the gospel, especially during the Millennium. We cannot adopt a literal interpretation of it, for then we should have animal sacrifices restored; whereas the Scriptures repeatedly declare, that God hath now no pleasure in the blood of bulls and of goats; that such "sacrifices and offerings he willeth not."² They were, indeed, necessary until CHRIST came, as serving to show forth the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. But when the fulness of the time appointed for his Advent had arrived, "then said he, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."³ Observe then, animal sacrifices are thenceforth taken away; abolished for evermore. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, the innocent for the

¹ Philip. ii. 2.

² Heb. x. 5.

³ Heb. x. 9.

guilty, an offering and a sacrifice to God, of a sweet-smelling savour; and "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."¹

To affirm that those sacrifices mentioned in Ezekiel, will be animal sacrifices of a *commemorative* character, as has been affirmed, certainly does seem returning to the weak and beggarly elements and carnal ordinances, imposed till the time of Reformation. The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. We therefore adopt what appears to us a much more grand and worthy view of the chapters referred to, even a figurative and spiritual view: "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." We interpret them, for example, by the light of such texts as the following. "Ye are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."² "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. By him therefore let us offer the *sacrifice of praise* to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name:"³ "so shall we render the calves of our lips."⁴ "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit."⁵ "But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with *such* sacrifices God is well pleased."⁶ "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which

¹ Heb. x. 14. See Note XX. ² 1 Peter ii. 5. ³ Heb. xiii. 12—15.

⁴ Hosea xiv. 2.

⁵ Psalm ii. 17.

⁶ Heb. xiii. 16.

is your reasonable service.”¹ Making, then, the Bible its own commentary, and therefore taking entirely a spiritual view of the temple alluded to, we are borne out fully in conceiving, that during the period under consideration, there will be ordinances of a peculiarly rich, spiritual, and exalted character. Teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but the eyes of God’s people shall behold their teachers, and in this mountain, (namely, Zion or the church,²) shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a “feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.”³ “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD,”⁴ And thus they shall worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: “and the LORD will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke, (the constant symbol of the Saviour’s presence,⁵) by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”⁶ “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.”⁷

¹ Rom. xii. 1.² Compare Heb. xii. 22. Gal. iv. 26.³ Isaiah xxv. 7. ⁴ Isa. lxvi. 23. ⁵ Exod. xlii. 21, 32. xl. 34—38.⁶ 1 Kings viii. 10. Ezek. x. 4.⁷ Isa. iv. 5.⁸ Malachi i. 11.

5. It shall be a season of unprecedented HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY. Persons shall no longer mourn, (at least in the degree they do now) because of a body of sin and death, weighing down the spirit, and obstructing its meditations; no longer be vexed with the fiery darts of the adversary, or with the risings of inbred corruption. They shall no longer fear the fury of the oppressor, nor be afflicted with becloudings of Jehovah's countenance: "their sun shall no more go down, neither shall their moon withdraw itself; for the LORD shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended." "They shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid; and their sleep shall be sweet. They shall dwell safely, and be quiet from fear of evil." The inhabitant shall no more say "I am sick." Owing to the cessation of crime, and war, and intemperance, and vice, mankind shall then be far more vigorous, energetic, and healthy than they are at present. Besides, in consequence of the improved state of agriculture and civilization, and of other causes, under the divine blessing, the different regions of the globe will probably become much more genial and friendly to human life.

It will be a period of GREAT ABUNDANCE. The LORD will send them corn, and wine, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness; and they "shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree," and "the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that

soweth seed ; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.”¹ “The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.”²

All these circumstances will conspire to augment exceedingly the multitude and longevity of the species. The age we are considering will be an abundant harvest of ingathering to the great husbandman. “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days ; for the child shall die an hundred years old ; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.” ‘The prophet,’ says Bishop LOWTH, ‘describes this renovation of the world, as a paradisaical state, and such as the patriarchs enjoyed before the flood, when men commonly lived near a thousand years.’ So that he that died at an hundred years of age, *would* have been looked upon as dying in his childhood, and be judged to have been cut off in the beginning of his years, as a punishment of some great sin he had committed. “And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your

¹ Amos ix. 13.

² Joel iii. 18.

plowmen and your vine-dressers: but ye shall be named the priests of the LORD; men shall call you the ministers of your God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion; therefore in their land they shall possess the double; everlasting joy shall be unto them.”¹

6. In fine, it shall be a period of unexampled EXULTATION AND THANKSGIVING. It will be the jubilee of the world, when peace, and purity, and joy shall predominate everywhere, and one universal emotion of extacy and gratitude shall circulate around the ransomed myriads. From the uttermost part of the earth shall be heard songs,—even glory to the righteous One!² The glory of God shall fill the heavens, and his praise shall replenish the earth. This whole orb shall become what Eden was before the fall—a portraiture and promise of heaven. “The mountains and the hills shall break forth before them into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the myrtle-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the fir-tree;” and all creation shall germinate into beauty and fertility, in the smile of its Creator. “For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”³

¹ Isaiah lxi. 4—7.

² Isaiah xxiv. 16.

³ Isaiah lxi. 11.

Whether the reign of the SAVIOUR on earth shall be *personal* or not, is a problem of which the writer declines attempting the solution. Whichever view we adopt, the difficulties in reconciling Scripture with itself appear considerable. Several wise and pious men have espoused the affirmative of the question, maintaining that the Saviour *will* reign personally. On the other hand, the general and prevalent opinion of the Church has been contrary to this. Who then shall presume absolutely to pronounce which interpretation is the true? As Bishop HALL rightly observes, ‘ what riddles are there in that prophecy, which no human tongue can read! Where to fix the beginning of that marvellous millenary, and where the end, and what manner of reign it shall be, whether temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven, undergoes as many constructions, as there are pens that have undertaken it.’ It is, indeed, an enigma which shall not be completely explicated, till “ the day shall declare it.” “ At the *end* the vision shall speak.”¹ But till then, “ the words are closed up and sealed.”²

The question then is one on which Christians must agree to differ: one, on which JEHOVAH seems purposely to have left his Church undecided, perhaps to exercise mutual kindness, candour, and forbearance. And while the writer cannot but lament the *extremes* into which some who have

¹ Habakkuk ii. 3.

² Daniel xii. 4 and 9.

held the personal view have permitted themselves to be carried, he bears willing testimony to the beautiful moderation, meekness, and sobriety of others of them. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded. Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.—Deplorable, truly, it would be, were the Lord's people to be alienated and divided from each other by disputations respecting the particulars of their own triumph ! This would indeed be turning their glory into their shame. ¹

Worthy of all admiration are the sentiments of the learned and pious Bishop NEWTON on this subject :—‘ Prudence, as well as modesty, requires that we should forbear all curious inquiries into the nature and condition of this future kingdom ; as how Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and afterwards loosed again ; how the raised saints shall cohabit with the living, and judge and govern the world ; how Christ shall manifest himself to them, and reign among them ; how the New Jerusalem, the city and church of the living God, shall descend from heaven to earth ; how Satan shall at last deceive the nations, and what nations they shall be. These are points which the Holy Spirit hath not thought fit to explain, and folly may easily ask more questions about them, than wisdom

¹ It is most gratifying to observe a growing moderation among true Christians on questions of doubtful interpretation, and a consequent approximation to unity of sentiment. As they draw nearer to CHRIST, they draw nearer to each other. May this spirit be increased more and more !

can answer. Wisdom, in the mysterious things of God, and especially in the mysterious things of futurity, will still adhere to the words of Scripture, and having seen the completion of so many particulars, will rest contented with believing that these also shall be, without knowing how they shall be. It is of the nature of most prophecies not to be fully understood, until they are fully accomplished, and especially prophecies relating to a state so different from the present as the Millennium. Perfectly to comprehend these, and all other prophecies, may constitute a part of the happiness of that period, for then they will all be fulfilled, and "the mystery of God shall be finished."¹

¹ ' See Dissertation on the Prophecies and Note XXI. The Author cannot resist the insertion also of the following admirable remarks of Mr. BARNES, on the foregoing topic:—' The writer's own studies in this field have brought him to the fixed conclusion—that many of the controverted points (those, for example, connected with our Lord's second advent,) are embarrassed with difficulties on both sides, sufficient to preserve wise and humble men from dogmatizing on either part; and to excite mutual respect and forbearance, rather than what we are too often constrained to see—' brethren grudging one against another.' The event indeed is a doctrine of faith—absolutely certain. The time and circumstantialia being imperfectly revealed, are made of forbearance, on which all, even the most sober interpreters, have been constrained in the course of investigation, in some points of more or less moment, to retract, modify or restate their views. Indeed, prophecy, according to the scriptural definition, is "a light that shineth in a dark place," yet not surely the light of "perfect day;" and well would it be for us, if the confession of our ignorance would find vent in the Apostle's adoring contemplation,—"How unsearchable are his judgments! and his ways past finding out!" We may indeed justly expect clearer light to dawn upon us, as the consummation of the grand events draws on. Meanwhile we must combine diligent study with cautious applica-

But how, it may be asked, shall this latter day of glory be consummated? We reply—Simply by the same agent, and the same instrumentality, at present in operation. If these will not produce the desired results, what will? Judgments? No: these cannot renovate the heart, as was sufficiently exemplified in the case of Pharaoh. Judgments have never reformed the devils; nor will they be more efficacious with men. The ungodly, when afflicted, may gnaw their tongues, and blaspheme the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores; but they will not repent of their deeds. The day of trouble and of rebuke is often one of blasphemy.¹

Some are of opinion that the personal appearance of CHRIST will convert mankind. They insist greatly on that text—“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with

tion. We must be content, for the most part, with the statement of general views and results. If the events are clear, the time, mode, and means of their accomplishment are often undefined. We are assured that none of the Divine predictions can fall to the ground; that the events contemplated in them are the fruit of the Lord's superintending love to his church, and that they will all issue in the final advancement of his own glory. In this recollection it is most suitable to cultivate that truly Christian spirit of patient expectancy, which, in childlike humility, not in slumbering indolence, is content to leave to the Lord the unfolding of his own purposes.’—*Memoir of Mary Jane Graham*. p. 169, 170.

While the present work was passing through the press, the writer received from London a little treatise, entitled ‘*SOBER VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM*,’ by the Rev. THOMAS JONES of Creaton; in which he has had the satisfaction to perceive a surprising correspondence of statement with his own, by a venerable and approved divine.

¹ Rev. xvi. 10, 11. 2 Kings xix. 3.

the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.”¹ But what, in the plain import of the words, is the Spirit of his mouth, but the Holy Spirit? as it is written of the Saviour, “he *breathed* on them, (the disciples,) and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” And so again we read of “the rod of his mouth,”² and of “the sword that goeth out of his mouth,”³ “even the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” And this is parallel with “the brightness of his coming” mentioned; even the brightness of the light of religious knowledge, consequent on an abundant communication of the Spirit and the word.⁴ This at least is the primary meaning of the phrase; it may have a more full developement at Christ’s coming to the last judgment. That error and irreligion will not be destroyed, and Christianity universally established, by any demonstration of mere physical or external power, is expressly stated in the prophet Zechariah; when, referring to this very event, he says, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”⁵ What is darkness, but the absence of light? What is sin, but the opposite of holiness? Well, the Lord will just abolish *spiritual* darkness by introducing knowledge; sin, by introducing sanctity. This is the fitting, and indeed only practicable mode. It is answerable to the nature of things. Spirit is suitably actuated only by Spirit. The

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 8.⁴ Rev. ii. 16.² John xx. 22.⁵ See Isaiah lx. 1—3.³ Isaiah xl. 4.⁶ Zech. iv. 6.

soul in its unconverted state is dead—"dead in trespasses and sins." And can any outward or natural thing whatever infuse life into it? No—nothing but "the Spirit of life" can be the life of the Spirit. That heavenly breath must breathe upon the slain, before they can live.¹ Therefore says Christ,—
 "Ye must be born of the Spirit."

But it is alleged by respectable divines, that the means at present employed for the conversion of the world, 'never yet converted any one nation or city.'² Absolutely and literally speaking, perhaps they never did. But do we forget the thousands that were converted on the day of Pentecost, at the preaching of one sermon? Do we forget that St. Paul was affirmed to have turned away much people after him? Do we forget, that the apostles were accused of having turned the world upside down? And in short, that, in no very considerable interval of time from the first promulgation of the Gospel, idolatry and paganism were nearly annihilated, over the surrounding nations? 'The historians, who have written of this reign,' (that of Constantine,) says Bishop NEWTON, relate how even the most remote and barbarous nations were converted to the faith, Jews as well as Gentiles. Have we not witnessed similar results ourselves? Need we to remind the reader of the various conversions and revivals of religion in America, in the days of Brainerd, Eliot, Edwards, and Whitfield?

¹ Ezekiel xxxvii. 9.

² John iii. 3, 5, 6.

³ See Preface to Sermons by Rev. Hugh M'NEIL, preached at St. Jude's, Liverpool.

or, of the marvellous changes produced among the Greenlanders, the Esquimaux, the natives of Southern India, the islanders of the South Sea, and those of New Zealand? And, shall the same spiritual apparatus, so to speak, which was effectual to produce results like these, not be effectual to regenerate the world? It seems unreasonable to doubt it. Admitting that even one soul had been converted through the gospel, that fact would establish its efficiency as an instrument to convert all. For what but an Almighty power could bring a clean thing out of an unclean? could 'create a soul beneath the ribs of death?' He that could do this, can do what He pleases. For, is the Spirit of the LORD straitened? or his sword blunted? or his arm wearied? Is he not "the eternal Spirit"¹—the "Spirit of might?" Is any thing too hard for him, who garnished the heavens?² O! let us take care, lest, in thus depreciating the present mode of conversion, we dishonour the Spirit of the Lord! Where, in all the sacred volume, is the existing constitution for saving souls superseded and another promised? No where. The present times are "the last times." The present dispensation is the last dispensation: one that is to "remain," "a kingdom that cannot be moved;"³

¹ Heb. ix. 14.² Job xxvi. 13.

³ Hebrews xii. 27, 28. 'The especial property of this kingdom is, that (*ασαλευτος*) it cannot be moved, or shaken; and to speak of the *unshaken immovable* kingdom, is all one as if it expressly mentioned the *kingdom of Christ*; seeing that only is so. But that which is here peculiarly intended is, that it is not obnoxious to

and, it is the dispensation, or “ministration, of the SPIRIT.”

That the millennial state, then, will be realized by any new spiritual system or dispensation, we look upon as a mere chimera, destitute of all warrant or foundation in Scripture. Nor is it a harmless notion, but one calculated to defeat the very object which its maintainers have at heart, namely, the world's conversion. For if we undervalue the Spirit, we shall not earnestly desire him for mankind; and if we desire him not, we shall not ask for him; and if we ask not, we shall not receive. He honours them that honour him.

Is it necessary to adduce further proofs, that the universal kingdom of Christ upon earth will be the work of this divine agent? If so, let the reader weigh calmly the following texts among others—“Thou sendest forth thy SPIRIT; they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.”¹ Here the renovation of the world seems expressly ascribed to the Third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity. To the same purport is this passage—“Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; until the SPIRIT be poured upon us from on high. *Then* judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the

such a shaking or removal, as the church state was under the Old Testament; that is, God himself would never make any *alteration* in it, nor ever introduce another church, state, or worship; but has, by his eternal Son, put the last hand to it.”—Dr. John OWEN, ‘On Hebrews.’

¹ Psalm civ. 30.

fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever ?'¹ "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground ; I will pour my SPIRIT upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as the grass, as willows by the water-courses."² "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun : when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the SPIRIT of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."³ Once more—"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my SPIRIT upon *all flesh*, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions : and also upon the servants and upon the hand-maids in those days will I pour out my SPIRIT."⁴ This prediction was partly fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Then was vouchsafed a specimen of what the Lord the Spirit could, and subsequently would, perform. But that it was only a specimen is manifest ; because the Spirit was not then effused upon "all flesh ;" and besides, the apostle Peter stated on that very occasion, "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are *afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'⁵

¹ Isaiah xxxii. 18—17.

² Ibid. xlii. 3, 4.

³ Ibid. lix. 19.

⁴ Joel ii. 28, 29.

⁵ Acts ii. 39. After these texts, were it necessary to produce any human authorities, to prove the same point, we might mention the names of HOWE, SCOTT, ROBERT HALL, Dr. FYE SMITH, JONES, &c.

And be it observed, that the period when this prophecy was to receive its complete accomplishment, is termed "the last days." Therefore, *these* are *they*.

We hold then, that mankind will be converted, simply and solely by means of the instrumentality employed from the commencement: only worked, we admit, in a manner immeasurably more vigorous and diffusive. In place of the promised blessing being imparted only in occasional sprinklings, it shall be *poured* out—and that 'in floods:' in place of dropping only on favoured spots, it shall be rained upon the wide expansion of the world.

The immediate preparation for this effusion will be the destruction of all infidel powers.¹ This will be, as it were, the breaking up of the fallow-ground, introductory to the sowing of the seed of the kingdom. All stumbling-blocks, barriers, and impediments will thus be removed. "The way will be prepared," that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, and truth march forward unobstructed, to her universal victory. The pouring forth of desolating judgments on the unconverted will probably be the means of impressing them that escape with a conviction of the Divine origin of the Gospel, and of disposing their minds to embrace it. Thus, we read with reference to this very occurrence,—“And thou (Gog) shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and

¹ See Isaiah xxxiv, and xxxv. 1, 2.

I will bring thee against my land, that *the heathen may know me*, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." ¹

¹ Ezekiel xxxviii. 16. See also chapters xxxvi. 23, and xxxix. 21. God has, in times past, made use of judgments as *means* of forwarding his cause and kingdom in the world: for instance, at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, when the Divine wrath was so emphatically executed upon that devoted people who had filled up the measure of their sins by crucifying the Lord of glory. What an impressive testimony was that, to all nations, of his displeasure against the opposers of his Gospel. In the same manner also was the cause of the Reformation forwarded in the wars that occurred, about that period, upon the Continent.

In connection with the above topic, the following extract from the newly-published volume of Dr. CHALMERS will be read with interest:—“We cannot get the better of an impression, grounded on what we hold to be the general sense of Scripture, and which we think may be distinctly traced in many of its passages, that the next coming of the Saviour is not a coming to the final judgment on the day of the general resurrection. This we hold to be the faith of the great majority; and yet there is much in the Bible to discountenance it. In prophecy, there is a distinct Millennium foretold, nor do we see how this can be expunged from the future history of the divine administration; and this indefinite period of peace and prosperous Christianity upon earth, is to be ushered in, it would appear, not as the ultimate term of a progressive series, along the successive steps of which, one nation is to be converted after another—till in the triumphs of a universal faith, made out by the gradual advancement of light and knowledge, to the uttermost ends of the world, the earth is at length to be transformed into the fair habitation of piety and righteousness. We would speak with diffidence; but as far as we can read into the prophecies of the time that is before us, we feel as if there was to be the arrest of a sudden and unlooked-for visitation to be laid on the ordinary processes of nature and history; and that the Millennium is to be ushered in, in the midst of judgments and desolations, and frightful convulsions, which will uproot the present fabric of society, and shake the framework of its machinery into pieces. It is still as much the part of missionaries to carry the gospel unto every people under heaven, as it was of the apostolic missionaries who went forth over all the then known world previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. But though in these days they preached it universally, they did not plant it universally; and in like man-

In those days, moreover, Christians will exhibit far more faithfully and vividly, than, alas! they do at present, the proper genius of Christianity, and spirit of its adorable author. They will be burning and shining lights: showing forth the praises of the Lord, and illuminating the world

ner, we can imagine now a general publication without a general conversion of the nations, and that, instead of a diffused and universal Christianity being anterior to the next coming of the Saviour, that coming may be in judgment and sore displeasure on the irreligion and apostacy of a world that had now prepared itself for the outpourings of an accumulated wrath, by its continued resistance to all the ordinary demonstrations. Instead of a diffused and universal Christianity being anterior to the next coming of the Saviour, that coming itself may be anterior to a diffused and universal Christianity—to the restoration of the Jews, and the consequent fulness of the Gentiles. We speak not of a personal coming; there was none such at the destruction of Jerusalem, though it seems at least as if the Son of man was then said to come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. But certain it is that a coming is spoken of as yet in reserve, when, instead of being met by the glad acclamations of a Christianized world, he will come like a thief in the night, and with sudden destruction as with a whirlwind—when, as in the days of Noah and Lot, He will abruptly terminate the festivities and the schemes, and the busy occupations of a secure and wholly secular generation—and, so far from coming down on a regenerated species, then waiting in joyful expectancy for their king, it is asked whether, when this descent, whatever it may be, is accomplished, “Verily shall the Son of man find faith on the earth!” We say this not in full confidence, or for the purpose of dogmatizing any, but for the purpose of exciting all to an inquiry of deepest interest, and we would not advise a perusal of the more recent interpreters of prophecy till Mede, and Chandler, and Newton, and Hurd, and Horsley, and Davidson, have become familiar to them. Then may they address themselves to the lucubrations of Cuninghame, and Faber, and Irving, and M’Neile; and Bickersteth. The little work of the last mentioned author is written with so much caution, and is at the same time so pervaded by the unction of personal Christianity, that it may with all safety be made the subject of an immediate perusal.’—See Third Volume of Dr. CHALMER’S Collected Works, p. 372.

widely around them. Useful, affectionate, meek, pious, and altogether lovely, they shall be eminently instrumental in winning souls to the Saviour,—in alluring multitudes, who shall behold their good works, to glorify God in the day of their visitation. This seems predicated in the following passage of Isaiah, addressed to the church—" Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people ; but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."¹

Then also shall missionary efforts be vastly increased. Greater exertions than the world has yet witnessed, or even dreamed of, shall be made to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. In proportion as the warmth of divine love shall expand men's hearts, selfishness will decline, and costlier offerings be cast into the treasury of the Lord. " Then thou shalt see, and flow together, (or overflow with joy,) and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah ; all they from Sheba shall come : they shall bring gold and incense ; and they shall show forth the praises of the LORD."²

¹ Isaiah lx. 1—3. See Note XXII.

² Isaiah lx. 5—7.

Then, God shall give the word, and great shall be the company of its preachers. He will raise them up, both in goodly numbers, and also richly furnished with all utterance and all knowledge; with all the requisite endowments of gifts and grace. They will be sons of thunder, and sons of consolation; and their word will be with power. 'Then will the time have come to extend the institutions of the gospel throughout the world. Benevolence, like the air, will move to fill up a vacuum. Like the light from its great fountain, it will fly to cheer the nations who sit in darkness. And having no resistance to encounter, but the simple power of error, the conflict will be but momentary, and the victory complete. This also is in accordance with prophecy; for immediately after the downfall of Babylon is announced, all heaven breaks forth in extacy, saying, "Let us rejoice and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." The Church of Christ is called his bride; and the conversion of the nations to Christianity and to God, the day of her espousals.'¹

Meanwhile, the spirit of grace and of supplication being poured out plentifully on the church, her children will be incited to an unprecedented earnestness and importunity in prayer, for a blessing on the seed sown; and it, thus watered, will take root downward and bear fruit upward, with

¹ Dr. BENCHER.

more than the rapidity of a Canadian spring. "A nation shall be born at once :"¹ "because a short work will the LORD make upon the earth."² "Before Zion travailed, she brought forth ; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing ? Who hath seen such things ? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day ? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."³ Yea, so innumerable will the offspring of the church be, they are compared to the drops of dew from the womb of the morning.⁴ "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation : I the LORD will hasten it in his time."⁵

In the progress of these events, the heart of the Jews shall be turned unto the Lord, and the veil, now upon it, be taken away ; and they shall embrace that Saviour whom their ancestors crucified, and propagate that faith which once they destroyed. They shall become, with the Gentiles, one fold, under one Shepherd. And thus will the fulness of the Gentiles come in, and all mankind be converted unto God. For, if the fall of them, (the Jews,) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more the fulness. And thus is the conversion of that interesting people described by the prophet, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows ? Surely the isles shall wait for

¹ Isaiah lxvi. 8.² Rom. ix. 28.³ Isaiah lxvi. 8.⁴ Psalm cx. 3.⁵ Isaiah lx. 22.

me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." ¹

Such are the very glorious things yet to be realized on this fallen planet. Religion will not always be in a low and struggling condition. The church will not always be contemned and trodden down by the foot of persecution. The wild boar will not alway waste her vineyards. Surely there is an end, and her expectation shall not be cut off.² The era is rapidly approaching, when Zion shall arise from the dust, and lay aside her mourning, and put on her beautiful garments, and sit as a queen, and see no sorrow. The Branch of the Lord shall yet be beautiful and glorious, and this world, so long the habitation of cruelty, the principality of Satan, the abode of every unclean and every hateful spirit, the very suburb and counterpart of hell, shall realize scenes, which heaven itself shall contemplate with complacency.

‘ O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplished bliss, which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy ?
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now : the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive

¹ Isaiah lx. 8, 9.

² Prov. xxiii. 18.

The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
 All creatures worship man, and all mankind
 One Lord, one Father. Error has no place ;
 That creeping pestilence is driven away ;
 The breath of heaven has chased it. In the heart
 No passion touches a discordant string,
 But all is harmony and love. Disease
 Is not : the pure and uncontaminate blood
 Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.
 One song employs all nations ; and all cry
 Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us !
 The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
 Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy ;
 Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
 Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.'

COWPER.

But, it may be said, ' Alas ! who shall live when God doeth this ? ' What will these glorious scenes be to us, who shall not be on earth to see them ? And is it then so, Christian reader ! that you cannot exult in the very anticipation of such a period, when God shall be glorified, Christ triumphant, and his people happy ? Would not such a temper argue a state of mind very unlike indeed, that which should characterize a true believer ? Abraham, the father of believers, rejoiced in the prospect of Christ's day. He saw it by faith, and was glad. Cannot you likewise see this by faith, and be glad ? If you are a genuine Christian, you are a member of that heavenly community, in the welfare of which all the members rejoice, and by sympathy participate. For the whole body of Christ has but one heart. Admitting that you may *not* be personally present on earth, during the

happy time referred to, yet you will be present in **spirit**, joying and beholding their happiness and **order**. Yea, and even now, the prospect of such a state of things should be fragrant to you, as breezes from some balmy shore, regaling the mariner at sea, long ere he reaches it. Yea, the blessedness that awaiteth the church should stimulate you to spread every sail of endeavour, and exert every breath of prayer, with the view of approximating to the longed-for delight. This is one great benefit of Christian hope : it annihilates intervals, and animates effort. Like the spies sent forward by the leader of Israel, it surveys the promised land, and plucks a specimen of its fruits, before the inheritance is conquered. "Rejoice in hope," says the apostle. The province of hope considerably resembles that of faith. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." It anticipates what is promised, approximates what is distant, and substantiates what is invisible.

'By a lively hope of such a state of things,' says Mr. Howe, 'we should have the anticipated enjoyment of the felicity of those times : and have a great deal of reason, though it may be we are to suffer hard and grievous things in the mean while, to compose ourselves, and to enter upon that state of suffering very cheerfully ; to wait patiently and pray earnestly, that of so great a harvest of spiritual blessings to come upon the world in future time, we may have some first-fruits in the mean

time : as it is not unusual, when some very great and general shower is ready to fall, that some previous scattering drops light here and there as forerunners.¹

Let us then both labour and contribute strenuously, to hasten a consummation so devoutly to be wished. The Lord works by means. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And who will deny, that in exact proportion to the amount of exertion made in a spirit of simple dependence on the heavenly blessing, will be the amount of success? We may now sow the seed, that shall wave its golden ears in the millennial harvest. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall be found, even though after many days."

O ! how it should grieve and sadden us, to see our species in its present condition, to see the whole world lying in the wicked one ?² ' Even within the pale of Christendom, what deplorable blindness and bigotry, what narrow-hearted prejudice and enmity, what freezing antinomian orthodoxy, what absolute deadness to vital religion, prevail !³ Yea, even within the region of the church, the sacred circle within a circle, what dimness and obliquity of spiritual vision, what sectarian and schismatical propensities, what deficiency in love to God and man, what weeds of error and heresy, what unmortified corruptions, and what roots of bitterness, deform

¹ From Sermons on the 'Outpouring of the Holy Spirit,' by which the writer acknowledges himself to have been much instructed.

² ὅτι τὸ πᾶν τῆς πόλεως John v. 19.

³ Note XXIII.

the garden of the Lord. O! how should the contemplation of such things affect us! How, like Nehemiah's,¹ should our countenance be sad, when the spiritual Jerusalem, "the mother of us all,"² lieth so desolate! How should we mourn and weep, "sigh and cry," to behold on every side sin rampant, Satan paramount, Christ dishonoured, and man ruined!

Nothing can reverse this posture of affairs, but the pouring out of the blessed Spirit. Nothing can renew the world, but what renews an individual. No other agent is adequately powerful, penetrating, and diffusive. Were he vouchsafed, all the evils which at present oppress us, would speedily be abolished. Sin;—for he is the Spirit of holiness and goodness. Error;—for he is the Spirit of truth. Strife and contention;—for he is the dove-like Spirit of peace and harmony. Fear and perturbation;—for he is the Spirit of adoption and of a sound mind. Sadness;—for he is the Spirit of joy. Envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness;—for he is the Spirit of holiness, benevolence, and love. In brief, were he once to breathe powerfully on the world, the earth would be renewed, and the wilderness overspread with a moral loveliness.

What a call then is here for prayer! Ah! here, we apprehend, is where we all are deficient. Here the cause, why the trophies of redemption are so

¹ Nehem. ii. 1—3.

² Gal. iv. 26.

few, considering the instrumentality employed. The children are come to the birth, but there is not strength to bring forth. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind ! we have not wrought deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.¹ We have not the Spirit, because we ask not, or at least, ask not, as we ought to ask. We are not straitened in GOD, but in our own bowels. We have not sufficiently high thoughts of the Spirit, and thus we do not sufficiently desire him. Great desires would produce great supplications and prayers ; which have uniformly been the harbingers of religious revivals. This was particularly evinced in the recent awakenings on the Western Continent.² ‘ It has been observed,’ says Dr. M’Crie, ‘ that when God intends any deliverance to his church, or revival of the interests of religion, he excites his saints to pray for it.’

Let all then, who love their fellow-men ; who regard their obligations to their Redeemer, who value their own consistency and their own peace of conscience ; who desire to see God glorified, and man emancipated from the worst, the most terrific, and the most extensive of all despotisms, unite in prayer and never cease, until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high. Ye that make mention of the LORD, or, that are the LORD’s remembrancers, to remind him of his promises, keep not silence, and

¹ Isaiah xxvi. 18. ² See Dr. SPRAGUE’S Work, and Note XXIV.

give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Plead with him in the impassioned invocation of the prophet, "Oh ! that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what thou hast prepared for him that waiteth for thee." ¹

'Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O prince of the kings of the earth ; put on the visible robes of thine imperial majesty ; take up that unlimited sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee ; for now the voice of thy bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed.' ²

¹ Isaiah lxiv. 1—4.

² Milton.—This is to be your prayer and mine to the day of death ; we are to give him no rest, he desires none. Here is our encouragement to prayer. He and he only *is pleased* with ceaseless importunity.'—Rev. Wm. Howells.

LECTURE VIII.

HEAVEN.

" There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.—HEB. iv. 9.

THIS series of papers would be exceedingly imperfect, were all mention omitted in them, among other topics of comfort, of the last and most felicitous of all—HEAVEN. However glorious and delightful the millennial state may be, still it will not be the highest reach of the church's glory;¹ as indeed is proved by its limited duration. It is to be succeeded by the loosing of Satan, the general judgment, and the celestial state.² This shall as much transcend the millennium, as that will any sublunary order of things since the fall. For God never takes from his church one degree of blessedness, but to replace it by a greater. She goes from glory to glory: her light shineth more and more unto the perfect day. All the people of God shall not be on earth during the blessed thousand years: therefore, the church, without

¹ Note XXV.

² Rev. xx. 7—15. xxi. 1.

these, shall not be perfect. Her members, and consequently her happiness, will be incomplete until all shall be "gathered together in CHRIST," and united with the angels in one exulting and harmonious family, in the kingdom of their father.¹

The Christian even now, has an incipient heaven in grace; for grace is the germ of glory. "We, which have believed, do enter into rest."² The believer *hath* passed from death unto life: is delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. But the greatest enjoyment he experiences here, is but a sprinkling, but a drop compared with that boundless and bottomless ocean of joy, which awaits him hereafter. God hath reserved some better things for him. There is a glory to be revealed: there *remaineth* a rest for the people of God.

The happiness of heaven will be of two kinds—negative and positive: the former including freedom from all evil; the latter the possession of all good. Let us consider, first, its *negative* happiness. It has been well remarked, that we know more of heaven by what it is *not*, than by what it is. There will then be,

1. A total and eternal exemption from all *corporeal* suffering. How frequently is the Christian afflicted here with weariness of body and exhaustion of spirits. As an old divine quaintly observes—"the soul pays now a dear rent for the

¹ Ephes. i. 10.

² Heb. iv. 9.

tabernacle in which it dwells.'¹ "The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak." His present body is one of humiliation:² a vile body, subject to a thousand pains, maladies, and infirmities. But we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." At death, the disembodied soul shall drop as a clog this covering of corruption, and ascend into a region, where they who are saved are made equal to the angels. Moreover, the believer's *body* shall one day likewise be glorified, and contribute to complete his blessedness. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness," (the righteousness of the Redeemer.) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."³

Even as the bulbous plant, revived by genial suns and rains,—the body of the believer, when the fleeting season of his sublunary existence is concluded, declines to its original dust, there to await that eternal spring, when, resuscitated in a new and nobler form, and brightened with imperishable beauty, it shall bloom in the Paradise of God. The word shall be issued—"Awake

¹ FLAVEL.

² σῶμα τῆς ταπεινότητος. Phil. iii. 21.

³ Rom. viii. 11.

and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead.”¹

Similarly as the body is now refreshed and strengthened by natural sleep, it shall be refreshed and strengthened by the sleep of the grave; and awake to renovated life and vigour on the morning of the resurrection.² “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” For the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.” This, then, will be the first ingredient in the cup of eternal blessedness—freedom from all corporeal suffering.

2. In heaven there is deliverance from trouble arising from wicked spirits and wicked men. Satan and his confederate angels, once denizens of the celestial city, having left their own habitation, shall never be admitted to it again. In the heavenly paradise there shall be no more curse, or thing accursed. Nothing that worketh abomination, or that maketh a lie, shall in any wise enter into it, but they which are written in the

¹ Isaiah xxvi. 19.

² Bishop HORSLEY on Psalm xc. 5, which he thus renders—‘Thou sheddest over them the dew of sleep’—has this remark: ‘The Psalmist here speaks of death and slumber, in which the bodies of the saints are recruited and invigorated for the future life. And who shall say, that some great change in the finer parts, the stamina of the human frame, is not gradually going on in the interval between death and the resurrection, to which change the dissolution of the grosser parts, by putrefaction, may be a preparatory step?’

Lamb's book of life. The saints shall there have a complete escape from the wrath and malice, the plottings and persecutions of wicked *men* also. A glorious high throne is the place of their sanctuary. No longer shall their persons be wounded by the sword, or their feelings by the cutting *words* of their oppressors. The Lord shall hide them in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide them, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

3. There shall be an utter absence of all darkness and affliction of mind: "And there shall be no night there."¹ The saved shall no longer be cast down with clouds of ignorance, or with gloom arising from adversity and tribulation. Where sin, the occasion of all ignorance and trouble, shall be abolished, the effect shall cease with the cause. "He that is dead hath ceased from sin." This to the believer is, if not always the most poignant, at least the most constant and habitual grief and trouble. Satan sometimes ceases from tormenting, but indwelling sin, never. It lends an additional sting to every other ill that flesh is heir to. It is that which most dishonours God, and therefore most distresses the godly. He exclaims—"O! wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"¹ By virtue of his

¹ Rev. xlii. 5.

² "Sin, sin, this body of sin and corruption, embittereth and poisoneth all our enjoyments. O that I were where I shall sin no more! O to be freed from these chains and iron fetters, that we carry about with us: Lord, loose the sad prisoners."—RUTHERFORD.

union with Christ, indeed, he is privileged with a partial freedom from it, even here. Sin has not the dominion over him, but he has the dominion over sin. However, as this virulent leprosy is in the walls, the building itself must be taken down, before deliverance from it can be final. At death the believer's victory over sin is absolute. The spirit of the just is then made perfect—"sanctified wholly."

The saints in heaven are "saints in light." They no longer droop under the hidings of God's countenance: no longer have cause to mourn the death or the absence of beloved friends; no longer are afflicted by any adversity whatever. "God wipes away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."¹ And they would not have been without those tears, when God himself shall come and wipe them away.²

Such shall be what are called 'the glorious negatives' of the future blessedness. That, however, will not consist in the mere absence of all evil, but also in the positive possession of all good. O! what will be the soul's sensations, on first arriving in the heavenly country: when admitted into the very palace and presence-chamber of the King of Kings! On entering that transcendent residence of glory, and honour, and immortality, the soul

¹ Rev. xxi. 4.

² MATTHEW HENRY'S Commentary.

shall forthwith find herself surrounded with scenery of splendour, in comparison with which the sun itself is dark. She shall see what the entranced evangelist beheld in his vision, "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." ('It proceeds from the midst of the throne,' says an eminent divine, 'because the Saviour sits there: and every stream, as it rolls along the golden streets, murmurs sweet praises to the fountain.'¹) "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." Even admitting that these expressions are figurative, still they warrant the highest possible conceptions of beauty, glory, and magnificence. The believer shall then indeed have come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God,

¹ Dr. WATTS.

the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God, the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

And in the society of such beings, every way bright, beautiful, and lovely, what intense, what ineffable satisfaction shall the soul enjoy. If in the society of those who are distinguished by talent and piety on earth, where there is still so much of imperfection, the believer can experience such heartfelt gratification, how much fuller shall he find in intercourse with the spirits of the just made perfect, and with glorious angels themselves. All shall be entirely of one mind; all shall have extended views of the Divine excellences and perfections, and shall love one another with an affection the most fervent, the most sincere, and the most unceasing. Oh! in the anticipation of such an intercourse, how should Christians love one another now!

There, all those great and holy characters, of whom we read in the scriptures, shall be seen eye to eye, and conversed with. We shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: join, as Mr. Baxter says, with Moses in his song; with David in his Psalms of praise; and with all the redeemed in the song of the Lamb for ever. We shall see Enoch walking with God; Noah enjoying the end of his singularity; Joseph, of his integrity; Job, of his pa-

tience ; Hezekiah, of his uprightness ; and all the saints, the end of their faith. Not only our old acquaintance, but all the saints of all ages, whose faces in the flesh we never saw, we shall there both know, and comfortably enjoy. Yea, angels as well as saints will be our blessed acquaintance. Those who were willingly our ministering spirits, will willingly then be our companions in joy. They, who had such joy in heaven for our conversion, will gladly rejoice with us in our glorification.’

Whether we shall know each other in heaven is a question of profound interest ; and therefore very frequently asked. Divines, I believe, have invariably answered it in the affirmative ; and their reasoning is certainly very strong. First—the inconceivably rapid intercourse that shall subsist between the heirs of salvation will occasion a perfect intelligence concerning all that shall occur in their blessed society. Again—the disciples of our Lord knew Moses and Elias on the Mount of transfiguration. Now our future knowledge shall not be less, but vastly greater than any previous. Our present knowledge shall be done away, only in respect of its imperfection. Lastly—the rich man knew Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom. If, then, they in hell recognise those in heaven, much more shall the latter recognize each other. ¹

On their arrival in “ that happy region, what mutual congratulations shall pass between the re-

¹ See the works of BAXTER and Bishop HALL.

deemed. How will they exult in their mutual felicity, while, standing upon the "sea of glass," they look back upon the long, dark, and ruffled ocean, from which they have escaped; and recount all the multiform and powerful temptations out of which the omnipotent arm of their loving God hath at length delivered them. Then shall they seal the veracity of that promise—(may we believe it to our comfort now!—) "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivereth him out of them all."

But the soul shall have, in heaven, communion not only with saints and seraphim, but also with their great KING himself. "He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people."¹ He will "cause them to approach unto him."² "They shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."³ What an inconceivable blessedness shall this be! It is accordingly called by divines "the beatific vision." How exalted a privilege to "see the king in his beauty;" yea, to dwell in his house throughout eternity—"to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

Unspeakable is the pleasure which the pious experience here in divine contemplations. They sit, at such seasons, in heavenly places. But their brightest present views are confused and dark, compared with those they shall enjoy hereafter. "For now they see through a glass darkly, but

¹ Rev. xxi. 3.

² Psalm lxx. 4.

³ Rev. xxii. 4.

then face to face; now they know in part, but then shall they know, even as also they are known.”
“ In the heavenly paradise, the tree of knowledge shall not be a forbidden tree.”

North or south of the equator, only a portion of the stars of the firmament is apparent. At the line, all of either hemisphere are visible. So we, in this present world, have but a partial view of spiritual things. We see, as it were, but a single hemisphere; and even that but indistinctly. Hereafter, however, we shall stand at the equator; and view the whole system of providence and grace, unfolded in its full magnificence.

The various excellences, which compose the supreme character, shall then be unveiled with a vividness and splendour, of which we can form, in the mean time, no adequate conception: and these shall be constantly increasing, according as our spiritual eye becomes more strong, and our spiritual capacity more expanded. “ O blessed state! O glorious felicity! They behold the beauty of the Lord, transported in divine contemplations, infinitely various and immortal. They feed upon his goodness with all the raptures of refined love, and are held long in extasy under the permanent sensations of the love of God.”¹ The very meditation of such things edifies and delights the spiritual mind; what then must the beholding of them do! What their fruition! ²

¹ Dr. Warre's Sermons.

² Note XXVI

But all this vision and enjoyment of GOD shall be given “in the face of Jesus Christ,”—the image of the invisible GOD, “the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” Accordingly, our Lord, desiring the consummation of his people’s joy, prays for them, “that they may be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory.”¹ And what an astonishing consideration it is, when we come to realize it, that creatures so plunged and drowned in depravity as we are, in our natural state—all but devils on the verge of perdition—should yet be translated to the heaven of heavens, there to behold “the excellent glory,” and to bask in its beams for ever and ever! Well may we exclaim—“Lord! what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou so regardest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”² But let us remember, that all is owing to the merits of CHRIST, that “worthy is the Lamb that was slain;” nor let us rest in mere exclamations; but see that these blessed truths sink deeply into our hearts, and become constraining principles of love and devotedness to *Him*, who hath manifested towards *us* a benevolence so amazing. In the vision of the SAVIOUR, both the understanding and the affections—the two grand constituent portions our nature—shall be fully exercised and gratified,

¹ John xvii. 24.² Psalm viii. 4, 5.

and the enlightening of the former shall be the means of enlivening the latter. The "eye will affect the heart." The saints shall adore their King, not only for what he hath done for them, but also for what He is in himself. Their spirits shall be completely entranced and swallowed up in the captivating sense of his loveliness. As they behold him, shining as the Sun, among that innumerable multitude of morning stars, "casting their crowns before Him," they shall exclaim, "Thou art the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely!"

I sum up this feeble attempt to describe what is indescribable, in the few following observations. The happiness of heaven will be pure, satisfying, uncloying, and everlasting. These four characteristics comprehend every thing that is to be desired.

First—it will be *pure*. Heaven is the Holy Place; an "inheritance undefiled." "And he showed me a *pure* river of water of life." It shall issue immediately from the incontaminate source, and be eternally unpolluted by any taint, contracted from an impure channel. The purity of that blessedness shall constitute its very essence. This salt shall preserve it from corruption: for holiness is the synonym of happiness, as sin is of misery.

Secondly, it will be *satisfying*. However varied and extensive our present possessions may be, still there is 'an aching void' in the heart, crying out insatiably, Give, give! But in God's presence

there is fulness of joy. The sight of the Father shall suffice us. When we awake up after his likeness, we shall be satisfied with it. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of his house, yea, abundantly satisfied; and shall drink of the river of *his* pleasures, for evermore. The pleasures of GOD may well satisfy his creatures. Oh! were all the happiness ever enjoyed by any individual on earth, or by all that ever dwelt upon it, distilled into one cup of rapture, it would not equal one single moment's delight, such as is experienced in heaven, constantly and without termination.

Thirdly. That blessedness will be *uncloying*. Earthly pleasures cloy, but do not satisfy. The soul expands beyond them, and rises above them. But those of heaven, while they satisfy, cloy not. The stream of life is ever sparkling—ever delicious. In heaven, also, there will be a copious *variety* of gratifications. This is indicated by the announcement, that 'the tree of life bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month.'¹ Thus, there is both an ample variety of delights, and also a constant succession of them. While every new enjoyment, every additional influx of felicity, shall call forth another return of praise to Him, who consented to die, that he might purchase them all, for his people. The oil of gladness, rising and superabounding in those vessels of mercy, shall overflow in gushes of melody. It is twice written,

¹ 'Seven score and four harvests in the year,' says BURNESFORD.

that they sung a *new* song. Though sung so oft, it was still new, because the love that prompted it, was still new. Nor shall it ever cease to awaken renewed emotions of melody and joy, in the hearts of the happy and grateful adorers. Freshness is the attribute of every thing celestial. Heaven is still "a new heaven." It never fades, or waxes old: never loses its pristine brightness. Because undefiled, it fadeth not away.

Though Heaven will be a rest, it will not be one of stone-like quietude, but of the liveliest activity.¹ This we infer from the previously-acquired habits of the saved. While in this world, at least from the epoch of their conversion, they are in a state of constant moral and intellectual advancement; continually acquiring increased skill, readiness, and ability in the service of their heavenly Father; and can we suppose that all this ennobling improvement, this elevating proficiency, will suddenly terminate at death? No—God doth nothing in vain. He hath made all things for himself. All his gifts and graces are intended to be exercised for his glory; for, "of him, and through him, and to him are all things." This life is but a school of discipline for a better. The moral and mental progress of believers, so far from ceasing on their leaving

¹ ' Full of peace as the prospect of heaven is, there is no indolent relinquishment of duty connected with the contemplation of it; for heaven is full of action. Its repose is like the repose of nature—the repose of planets in their orbits. It is a rest from all controversy with God—from all opposition to his will. His servants serve him.'—T. ERASMUS, Esq.

earth, advances them with greater rapidity than ever. "They go from strength to strength," and when in Zion they appear before God, then, with faculties fully developed, they serve him day and night in his temple. Accordingly entering into Heaven is termed by our Saviour "entering into life;" and the very character of life is motion. So active will the heavenly existence be, that the present is death compared with it. Yet this activity will be wholly free from fatigue. Otherwise it would not be Heaven. At present, we can scarcely separate from the idea of constant employment, that of weariness and pain. But *there* the body will be so adapted to the soul, that, instead of being an incumbrance, it will be a helper of her joy: her 'fit medium of communication with all the glorious inhabitants and scenery of heaven.' Our dispositions shall be so attuned to our occupations, that employment will be enjoyment. Our activity will be of preference. It shall prove our greatest gratification to do our Father's will. Even there the love of Christ is the constraining principle of obedience; for 'love never faileth.' We shall have an angel's beauty, and an angel's vigour, and more than an angel's gratitude; so that, with the utmost alacrity and cheerfulness we shall worship the Lord, not resting day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they

are and were created." "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests."

Fourthly. The blessedness of heaven will be *everlasting*. It is a grievous worm in the heart of all sublunary bliss, (and the dearer that bliss, the more poignantly that worm is felt,) that the pleasure must soon have an end.¹ But at God's right hand are "pleasures for evermore." The glorified saint is made a pillar in the temple of the Lord, "and he shall go no more go out."² Heaven is described as a golden city, to indicate the preciousness, purity, and permanency of its contentments. It is "a city that hath foundations." It would, says Baxter, be a hell in heaven, to think of once losing heaven; as it would be a kind of heaven to the damned, had they but hopes of once escaping.

Thus will the blessed employ an unending duration in spiritual intercourse and contemplation; in tuning their golden harps to hymns of praise; or, in winging their gladsome and unwearied flight, as God may commission them, on errands of love around the regions of his universe. And thus will they be perpetually advancing in knowledge and in glory, and consequently in happiness, without any

¹ Were all of us more prosperous than any of us is, yet that one thing were enough to cry down the price we put upon this life, that it continues not; as one answered to him who had a mind to flatter him in the midst of a pompous triumph, by saying, What is wanting here? 'Continuance,' said he.—Archbishop LEIGHTON, on St. Peter.

² Rev. iii. 12.

limitation : for of the Saviour it is written, that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."¹ The Holy Spirit in the soul shall "spring up into life *everlasting*."²

And what an idea it affords of the immeasurable greatness of the divine nature, that beings so matured and exalted, so intelligent and holy, as the glorified shall be, will be continually ascending nearer and nearer to the supreme excellence, throughout innumerable ages, and yet never reach that excellence, yea, that there shall still be an infinite distance between it and them ! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God !"

And, Christian reader, is it so, that we, who are of yesterday, we, who may say to corruption, "Thou art my father, and to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister," are, nevertheless, susceptible of so high and august an advancement ; and shall we not kindle with desire at the very contemplation ? O ! what an elevating thought, that we are destined for an existence so transcendently glorious ! How it dignifies and ennobles our nature. Truly has it been remarked, that he, who denies a hereafter, annihilates man's highest dignity, severing the bond which connects him with eternity, with angels, and with God.

Seeing, then, that we look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be ! how superior to

¹ Isaiah ix. 7.

² John iv. 14.

earth: how triumphant, as well over its sinful allurements, as over its calamities and vexations. Oh! let us aim to walk worthy of our high vocation, glorifying him, who hath called us to glory and virtue. Let us serve the Lord with gladness now, who hath purchased for us the privilege of reigning with him for ever. Let us not be contented with being merely safe, but aspire to a pre-eminence in godliness. Let us not rest satisfied with the place of "a door-keeper" in the heavenly kingdom, but strive to obtain a station near the throne.

Though in heaven the joy of all will be full, yet there will likely be degrees of glory. For, first, there are degrees of misery in hell. Time shall receive *greater* damnation; be accounted worthy of sorer punishment than others.¹ That servant who knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.² By analogy, then, we may conclude that, in heaven, some will be more honoured than others.

Again, there are degrees of glory in the church below; some saints excelling others in virtue: therefore we infer, that, in the church above, (the same in character, and one kingdom with this,) there will obtain a similar diversity of degrees. In the ark, the type of heaven, there were several compartments,³ and so our Saviour affirmed, "In my Father's house are many mansions." Once more; there are different ranks and orders among the holy

¹ Hebrews x. 29.

² Luke xii. 47, 48.

³ Gen. vi. 14, 16.

angels, cherubim, seraphim, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. And we read of one, whose peculiar privilege it is to stand in God's immediate presence. A correspondent gradation shall doubtless subsist among those, who "shall be as the angels." Some shall sit on Emmanuel's right hand; others on his left.¹ The elders shall occupy seats round about the throne;² while others of the redeemed, marshalled in widening circles behind these, 'orb within orb,' shall render to their king their willing homage. Every individual shall have his proper place and province; none interfering with another. In the universal choir, each maintains his allotted part: while the whole economy of that happy commonwealth, is conducted with the utmost harmony and order. "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

Finally; it seems altogether consistent with the divine justice and the fitness of things, that those who have been distinguished by zeal, service, experience, sufferings, and faithfulness in the cause of God on earth, shall be raised to stations of distinguished honour and respect in heaven. Accordingly, we read, that "he shall reward every one according to his works;" that in proportion to their diligence in improving the trusts committed to them here, some shall be rulers over few, and some over many things. All indeed shall enter into the joy of their Lord; all shall participate in

¹ Matt. xx. 28.

² Rev. iv. 4.

his pleasures; but while they that were wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, those that turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars, for ever and ever. And even among these, one star shall differ from another star in glory. An apostle shall wear a brighter crown than a common minister; a martyr than an ordinary Christian. The aged saint, too, who bore the burden and heat of the day, shall probably be accounted worthy of more honour, than the child, who died in infancy. The cups of all will be full, but some shall be more capacious than others. Their previous stages of sanctity, though not the procuring *cause*, shall yet be the *measure*, of their future felicity.

Rest not satisfied, then, Christian! with low attainments in grace and knowledge. You have no grace whatever, if you do not desire more.¹ He loves not Christ at all, who labours not after a perfect conformity to him. If the living water be in the heart, it will be ever rising toward its fountain. Evince, then, your conversion, by coveting earnestly the best gifts, by spiritual-mindedness. "Set your affection on things above." "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue;

¹ 'Where the true grace of God is, there is still some sense of its weakness, and inclination after an increase therein.'—TRAIL, 'Throne of Grace.'

and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. So shall an entrance be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The higher you attain in devotedness to God here, the nearer to the throne you shall stand hereafter. He hath set no limit to your progression in moral and spiritual excellence. He hath said to no one point in the ascending scale of blessedness—"Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther." On the contrary, he hath commanded, saying, "Be ye holy, as I am holy." Every one that is perfect shall be as his master. It seems, indeed, essential to beings so constituted and circumstanced as the saints are, to go forward. The longer they dwell in the light of the Divine presence, the more resplendent must their countenances become. The longer they contemplate the fair beauty of the Lord, the more must they advance in intelligence, in love, and in every perfection.

Are you in any affliction, of mind, body, or estate? Live with heaven in your eye, and then, your light affliction, which (compared with eternity) is but for a moment, shall work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. When oppressed with pain, lassitude, or languor, remember that in heaven there shall be no more

pain, but joy and pleasure for evermore. When distressed with a sense of indwelling sin, recollect that, ere long, you shall be completely freed from every torment, and be as the angels of God. Are you "grieved for the affliction of Joseph?" Do you sorrow at beholding the spouse of Christ still in weeds, bewailing the absence of her Lord? Be consoled by the remembrance, that the day is rapidly approaching, when "thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation," a holy city, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband: sparkling with all manner of gems, and beaming with imperishable beauty: when they that mourned for her shall rejoice for joy, and shall suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, yea, be delighted with the abundance of her glory.¹

In fine, remember with adoring gratitude, that you are born again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation: wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now, for a season, if *need* be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations."

' Hear not these things idly, as if they concerned you not, but let them move you to resolution and action. Say as they said of Canaan, *It is a good land, let us go up and possess it.* Learn to use what you have here as travellers, and let your home,

¹ Isaiah lxi. 10, 11.

your inheritance, your treasure be on high, which is by far the richest and the safest.'¹

Thus—

' Into the heaven of heavens, I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air.'

Upled, it is hoped, by the light of truth. And oh! that what has been advanced respecting the nature of the celestial state, may be instrumental in convincing some one, hitherto inconsiderate, of the absolute necessity of a change of heart, in order to its fruition. Heaven, it will have been perceived, is not the kind of place men commonly suppose it to be. It is no Mahometan's paradise, nor Indian's elysium. The voluptuary could there no longer obtain his illicit gratification, or the intemperate his revels. God is a holy being, "the most holy;" his city is "the holy city;" and all its inhabitants are holy. Therefore, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Indeed, wanting this, a person could not be happy in heaven. Every thing around him would be totally uncongenial to his tastes and habits. He would be exiled from all his sources of enjoyment, and placed in a scene of things, with which he would not have the slightest sympathy. Even the imperfect purity of the spiritual in this world displeases him: how then could he endure their perfect purity in heaven? The few hours of the Sabbath are a weariness to him; what a torment then would be an eternal Sabbath? He likes not to retain God

¹ Archbishop LEIGHTON.

in his knowledge, his mind is enmity against God : how then could he endure the divine presence ? “ Can two walk together except they be agreed ? ”

Let then the unconverted be affectionately entreated to consider this—to consider it seriously. Nor let him despair. The Spirit of the Lord, who is given to all who earnestly seek him, can so entirely renovate the soul, that it shall come to abhor what formerly it loved, and to delight in that which formerly it hated. He that sitteth upon the throne says, “ Behold, I make all things new.” There is “ a new heaven,” and there must be a “ new heart,” before we can inherit it. “ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” He who hath wrought this change in thousands, can work it in thee also, beloved reader : “ for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

“ Seek then the LORD while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Knock loudly, and perseveringly, until he who hath the key of David, who openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth, arise and open unto thee. So will he renew a right spirit within thee : impart to thee a peace, which thou hast not heretofore experienced, the earnest of an everlasting rest ; and eventually admit thee into the glorious inheritance of his saints in light.

LECTURE IX.

ON CEASING FROM MAN, AND LIVING TO GOD.

“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?”—ISAIAH li. 22.

MAN, in his unrenewed condition, is a splendid pillar, broken from its pedestal, and lying in ruins on the ground. He is not fixed upon his Maker, but alienated from him by the blindness of his heart. All his tendencies, faculties, and affections are misdirected,—his whole foundations are out of course.

Engrossed with the trifles of time, he neglects the grandeurs of eternity: limits his horizon to this present scene, and seeks his heaven upon earth. In the beautiful language of inspiration, he “forsakes the fountain of living waters, and hews for himself cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

This is the besetting sin, the epidemic malady of our race; the universal monomania. It is not confined to the worldly, but, with shame and sorrow be it confessed, it is incident to Christians themselves, especially if at all affluent, or easy in their temporal circumstances. So apt is a carnal spirit to encrust it-

self on the heart, even of the holiest ; so liable is a person surrounded with riches, consequence, and comfort, and “ not emptied from vessel to vessel,” to settle upon his lees, to grow proud and secular ;¹ so apt are our very blessings to become our curses, by becoming ‘ cords of vanity,’ to tie us down to earth, like tents ; in place of cords of love, to draw us upward toward the Giver : so incident is it to the wisest, to say with David, “ I shall never be removed,” or with the fool in the gospel, “ Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”

Now this transference of the affections from the Creator to the creature, is the main cause, not only of our misery, but also of our guilt. “ It is an evil thing and bitter.” *Bitter*, because it exposes us to perpetual vexation and disappointment ; and *evil* or sinful, because it is a setting up of “ images of jealousy ” in our hearts, to the exclusion of the Lord of glory.

Accordingly, we find him frequently denouncing this sin in holy writ. It was the constant ground of his controversy with the Israelites ; and in the prophet Jeremiah we have a clear declaration of his divine mind upon the subject : “ Thus saith the LORD, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD : For he shall be like the heath of the desert, and shall not see when

¹ See Prov. xxx. 9.

good cometh ; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green ; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”¹

Let this then form the concluding topic of these Lectures, and may the LORD so bless our meditations, that we may be led to perceive and feel the utter insufficiency of all earthly confidences, and to set our affections there, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There are three respects, wherein it behoveth us to cease from man,—that is, to cease from placing our principal dependance on him—a private or personal—a public or civil—and a spiritual or religious respect.

First, we should cease from man, in a private or personal point of consideration. We may be favoured with kind and affectionate parents, with a beloved partner, brother, or sister, with children or companions, or relatives, or friends, in whom we take intense delight. But let us beware how we embark our happiness in them ; how we depend on them for our comfort and peace. Let us be duly thankful to God for such mercies : but not permit

¹ Jeremlah xvii. 5—8.

our regards to run out toward them inordinately. Otherwise they may become our idols : and all idols a jealous God will utterly abolish.

Let us accustom ourselves to contemplate all creatures as the mere vehicles or conduits, through which the Fountain of all goodness is pleased to convey felicity to us. Still let us account the felicity as coming from HIM : never forgetting that “ every creature is that to us, and no more, which GOD maketh it to be.” Be it our study to make him “ our *exceeding* joy,” and to live less upon the mercies of God, than upon the God of our mercies ! Let us place our enjoyment as much as possible in spiritual things : this will make us more independent of temporal comforts, and prove the way to their sanctification and continuance. This will render them comforts indeed.

It is a remarkable counsel of Epictetus, a heathen, ‘ If thou hast a pitcher,’ (σκευος)¹ ‘ remember it is but a pitcher : then when it is broken, thou wilt not so greatly grieve after it.’

To act in the above manner, however, will require the exercise of unceasing vigilance and prayer : yea, of a holy violence and resolute self-denial, such as the apostle Paul inculcates ; “ But this I say, brethren, the time is short ; it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep, as though they wept not, and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not,

¹ Compare 2 Cor. iv. 7. where the very same term is used, to express our bodies.

and they that buy, as though they possessed not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it.”—Why? “For the fashion of this world passeth away,” like a pageant from a stage; as the original imports.¹

Again, we should cease from man, in regard to honour and reputation. Total carelessness as to public opinion cannot be wisely recommended: we should “shun all appearance of evil,” and “provide things honest in the sight of all men;” that so we may not prove stumbling-blocks to others, but “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.” At the same time, we should not be excessively desirous of the golden opinions of our fellow-beings. “With us it should be a very small thing,”—a matter of very little moment, “to be judged of man’s judgment.” What so notoriously fickle as popularity? People cry, “Hosanna!” to-day, and, “Crucify him!” to-morrow. The populace of Lystra were one moment about to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, as gods; and presently after, were about to sacrifice them to their fury. They drew the apostle out of the city, having stoned him!² Truly is it said, “Favour is deceitful.”³ A person who places his joy in the admiration and applause of men, rides upon a plank in a tempestuous ocean, and can have no rest or quietness.⁴ Yea, the greater the satisfaction he derives from

¹ *σχημα*, 1 Cor. vii. 31. ² Acts xiv. 19. ³ Prov. xxxi. 30.

⁴ O momentary grace of mortal men,
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God!

such a source, the more tormenting will be his anxiety, lest he lose it. Besides, this is a most morbid state of mind. Happiness is thus built on an entirely wrong foundation. "Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" In this case, in order to the recovery of a sound state of mind, we must completely change our habit. We must shift our attention from man to GOD, and place our rejoicing in his favour and the testimony of our own conscience.¹ Then only will it be settled upon a sure and immoveable basis.

Once more, it behoves us to cease from depending on man, to assist us in straits and difficulties. When we neglect the Lord, and rely on this or the other friend to relieve us in an extremity, what do we frequently find? Either that he is not available at the time, or else, that from some cause or another he is wanting to us, while relief is supplied from quarters on which we did not at all calculate. Bishop Reynolds too truly observes, 'When in any kind of straits we have recourse to the creature for supply: either we find it, like our Saviour's fig-tree, without fruit, or, like our prophet's vine, as good as empty, the fruits thereof not worth the gathering; ² 'grapes of gall and bitter clusters; full of vanity, windiness, vexation and disappointment.

Who builds his hope in th' air of men's fair looks,
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast,
Ready with ev'ry nod to tumble down
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.

SHAKESPEARE.

¹ 2 Cor. i. 12.

² Hosea x. 1.

Friends fail either in their love, or in their power. In a word, take any creature helps in the world, and there will be something, nay, very much, of defect in them. All being, but God's, is mixed with not being.' ¹

Reader! have you not realized the justness of these observations? When you embarked your affections on any particular object, have you not afterwards found, that either that object was removed, or else, that you, from some failing or infirmity discovered in it, were doomed to feel its vanity and insufficiency? Or when you relied on some particular resource, to relieve you in an emergency, have you not found it at the hour of need, 'a brook in summer,'—dried up when most required? And did not the Almighty in all these experiences, emphatically say to you, "Cease ye from man!"

It is subjoined in the Scripture, as one reason for the duty inculcated, that "the breath of man is in his nostrils:" as if it were fluttering there, like a bird at the open door of its cage, ready at any moment to take its flight. And indeed, the transitory and uncertain character of our present existence is set forth in the inspired word by a variety of images, each strikingly expressive of brevity and evanescence; for examples, "a fading flower," yea, a "flower of the field" (liable to be trodden down at any instant by the foot of a beast;) "grass growing upon the housetop;" "in the morning green, and in the evening dried up, cut down, and

¹ Sermons on Hosea.

withered ;—"a post" speeding with all possible despatch toward his place of destination ;—"a shadow,"—"a weaver's shuttle :"—"a vapour that appeareth for a very little time, and then vanisheth away."

Besides, there is a flaw of imperfection even in the best of men. We find in the Bible the most eminent saints sometimes failing in the exercise of those very virtues for which they have been most distinguished. Thus, Abraham, for his remarkable confidence in God, was styled "the father of the faithful ;" yet, through weakness of faith he twice equivocated concerning his wife Sarah.¹ How sincere a man of God was Jacob : "an Israelite indeed : " yet of what egregious guile and falsehood was he guilty, in procuring his father's blessing in place of his elder brother.² Moses was the meekest man in all the earth, yet, on one occasion, he so lost that characteristic grace, as to draw down the Divine anger signally upon him.³ David was a model of clemency and forbearance,⁴ yet what enormous cruelty did he perpetrate in the matter of Uriah ! Once more, the apostle Peter, after receiving the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was conspicuous for his courage in the cause of truth ;⁵ yet, how did he afterwards compromise the truth, through fear of the Jews.⁶

¹ Gen. xii. 19 ; xx. 2—5. ² Ib. xxvii. 20—24. ³ Gal. ii. 11, 12.

⁴ Numb. xx. 3—13. Psalm cvi. 32, 33.

⁵ 1 Sam. xxiv. 1—7. ⁶ 2 Sam. iii. 31. xvi. 9—13.

⁶ See Acts iv. 13—19. v. 17—21. 29—32.

These instances of infirmity in the most excellent of men, of whom the world was not worthy, while they are proofs of the veracity of Scripture in thus candidly recording them, and should serve as warning beacons to ourselves—teach us also, not to “glory in men,” nor to place our reliance on any human individual. There is no perfection short of the Saviour.

We should cease from *fearing* man, as well as from trusting in him. “The fear of man bringeth a snare.” ‘The fearful’ are among the number “who shall have their part in the lake which burneth.”¹ “Who art thou,” says God, “that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the LORD thy maker?” He has the springs of all human action in his hand. All nations, and all individuals, with all their feelings, faculties and dispositions, are under his immediate and most absolute command. As the rivers of water, he turneth them whithersoever he will. Nor does any thing occur, however trivial, in which he does not exercise a decided interference. Whatever the men of the world intend, they yet do that, and neither more nor less, which “his hand, and his counsel determined before to be done.”² He, indeed, is not the author of the *sin* that is in their actions, that were impossible; “God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.”

¹ Rev. xxi. 8.

² Acts iv. 28.

While he presides in affairs, man acts altogether irrespectively of him.¹ Therefore, the sin is exclusively man's own. Still the event itself is from the Lord. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not?"² "Shall there be evil (or calamity) in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?"³ "I form the light, and create the darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."⁴ Can we think that the All-wise would permit any creature to act independently of him? If he did, then might his promises and threatenings fail of their accomplishment.

Were not every component part, even the most minute, of the vast providential system, under his immediate superintendence and direction, obviously the whole might go into derangement. Were not every thing ordered by God, *virtually* nothing could be so.

'Did not his eye rule all things † and intend
The least of our concerns, (since from the least
The greatest oft originate;) could chance
Find place in his dominion, or dispose
One lawless particle to thwart his plan?
Then God might be surprised, and unforeseen,
Contingence might alarm him, and disturb
The smooth and equal course of his affairs.

The Task, Book II.

We therefore entirely concur in the following

¹ Note XXVII.

² Lam. iii. 37.

³ Amos iii. 6.

⁴ To admit a general, and deny a particular providence, is a contradiction in terms.—HOWELS.

statement of a celebrated living theologian: 'We are ready enough,' says he, 'to concede to the Supreme Being the administration of the natural world, and to put into his hands all the force of its mighty elements. But let us carry the commanding influence of the Deity into the higher world of moral and intelligent beings; let us not erect the will of the creature into an independent principle. Let us not conceive that the agency of man can bring about one single iota of deviation from the plans and purposes of God, or that he can be thwarted or compelled to vary in a single case by the movement of any of these subordinate beings, whom he himself has created. There may be a diversity of operations, but it is God who worketh all in all. Look at the resolute and independent man, and you there see the purposes of the human mind entered upon with decision, and followed up by vigorous and successful exertion. But these only make up one diversity of God's operations. The will of man, active and spontaneous, and fluctuating as it appears to be, is an instrument in his hand, and he turns it at his pleasure. And he brings other instruments to act upon it, and he plies it with all its excitements: and he measures the force and proportion of each of them: and every step of every individual receives as determinate a character from the hand of God, as every mile of a planet's orbit, or every gust of wind, or every wave of the sea, or every particle of flying dust, or every rivulet of flowing water. This power of God knows

no exceptions. It is absolute and unlimited : and while it embraces the vast, it carries its resistless influence into all the minute and unnoticed diversities of existence. It reigns and operates through all the secrecies of the wisest man. It gives birth to every purpose. It gives impulse to every desire. It gives shape and colour to every conception. It wields an entire ascendancy over every attribute of the mind : and the will, and the fancy and the understanding with all the countless variety of their hidden and fugitive operations, are submitted to it. It gives movement and direction to every one point in the line of our pilgrimage. At no one moment of time does it abandon us ; it follows us to the hour of death, and it carries us to our place and our everlasting destiny in the region beyond it.' ¹

In the first chapter of the prophet Ezekiel we find mention of certain wheels, and of a spirit actuating and animating them. Now the Lord is that Spirit ; and what are the wheels but the turnings or revolutions of his providence ? The general arrangements of that providence may be compared to a vast machine, turning upon infinite love, impelled by infinite power, and regulated by infinite sagacity : while the life of every individual believer may be likened to a wheel in that machine ; and every particular incident in this life forms as essential a portion of God's universal providence, as the least pin in a piece of mechanism forms to the effectual working of the whole. The welfare also of

¹ DR. CHALMERS.

every member is necessary to the general welfare of the Church (even as the health of every limb is essential to the general soundness of the body) and consequently is secured by the self-same power, benevolence and wisdom, which secure the eventual victory and prosperity of the Church herself.

We are prone to exclaim in some affliction, Hitherto I might have trusted God: but, O! this distressing disappointment, this most untoward and irreparable misfortune! Wherefore did the Lord allow me to be thus snared and taken, when I constantly committed my way unto him, and earnestly entreated his guidance? Such is the manner in which weak human nature is wont to reason and disquiet herself in vain. But in similar terms might Joseph have argued, when incarcerated in the Egyptian prison. So, likewise, might his aged father have argued, when he complained, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not; and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." Yet each lived to trace God's good hand in the tribulation, making it the very road to his greater glory and felicity. And so, in every dispensation of the kind, Jehovah is simply trying his children's faith, affording them an opportunity of "glorifying Him in the fires," by their patience and affiance in Him; that He "also may glorify them," when the trial of their faith, "being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."¹

¹ 1 Peter i. 7.

Particular acts of providence may appear strange, and their wisdom questionable. Why, for instance, remove that valuable individual, and spare that other, who is an avowed enemy of righteousness?² “But let us judge nothing before the time. The wheels of providence are full of eyes, as the event will demonstrate. Among us mortals, it is accounted unfair to pass an opinion on unfinished workmanship. Extend the same justice to the Lord. Suspend your opinion of his handywork, until it be complete ! then shall you be convinced, that indeed, “He hath done all things well.”³

Questionless, this will prove no unimportant part of our future contemplations, and spring of our future felicity, to look back from the heavenly hills upon the long, intricate, and weary way, whereby we have been led during our pilgrimage below, —“a way that we knew not,” and observe the critical escapes that we have often had, and the wisdom and the power, and the watchfulness, and the tenderness, that were unceasingly exercised on our behalf. Here we behold but the face of the dial-plate. But when once we arrive within the veil, and perceive all the exquisite arrangements of the divine pre-ordination ; the wheels within wheels, the subtle, yet infrangible links which connected one part of the chain of events with another, what trivial occurrences, (as they seemed,) served to give a turn and propitious determination to our ever-last-

¹ Note XXVIII.

² Note XXIX.

ing destiny,—O, how shall our admiration be excited: how shall we laud and extol the wisdom and loving-kindness of that adorable Artist, who planned and put in motion, and conducted to its destined end, the incomparable mechanism!

What an evident and striking proof of the interposition of his providence is afforded by the present posture of the world. In the accelerated diffusion of moral and intellectual illumination,—in the progressive discoveries of science,—in the increasing facilities of intercourse between the most distant regions of the globe,—in the opening of an entrance into cities and countries, formerly almost inaccessible, as Damascus, China, and the interior of Africa, for instance,—in the gradual sapping of anti-christian and despotic dynasties,—in the rapid decline of the Mahometan empire, (actually perishing “without hand,”¹ or “help,”² like a drying up river,³)—in the reduction of Palestine to the liberal sway of the Egyptian monarch, and the remarkable instinctive movement, (in consequence) of the Jews, “the kings of the east,” toward the land of their progenitors; in all these, and other phenomena of the age, one can scarcely avoid recognizing and acknowledging the visible hand of Jehovah. The stream of events runs so parallel with that of Prophecy; the kingdom of providence so manifestly favours the kingdom of grace, that, while they mutually elucidate, they mutually evince one another.

¹ Daniel viii. 25.

² Ib. xi. 45.

³ Rev. xvi. 12.

Their astonishing coincidence leaves the unbeliever wholly without excuse : affording as it does, so unquestionable a demonstration of their both emanating from one all-wise and omnipotent Director.

Labour, then, Believer ! to get your mind firmly and immoveably established in this most certain and consolatory truth—"that the judge of all the earth doeth right." Here cast the anchor of your soul in every storm, and here hold fast, till the storm blow over. This alone will suffice to compose your feelings under the apparently adverse and wrong direction which affairs may sometimes take, in this imperfect and preparatory state of being.

"Rest in the LORD; and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."¹ &c. He that believeth shall not make haste; therefore "in patience possess ye your souls."

Say not when tried by *any* adversity—Hitherto I might have hoped in the Lord, but this misfortune cannot possibly be remedied. What ? Is anything too hard for Omnipotence ? "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of his understanding," Remember Job's assertion—"Though he *slay* me, yet will I trust in

¹ Psalm xxxvi. 7—11.

him." Have you not lived to see former occurrences, which you deemed at the time equally disastrous as the present, to have been ordained in very faithfulness to you? The same experience will you one day realize respecting this also. This likewise cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. This likewise, is one of the ALL things, which shall work together for your good.¹

Habituate yourself to view every event on its sunniest side. Each occurrence has a bright, as well as a dark complexion. Like the pillar of the cloud, while it frowns on God's enemies, it uniformly smiles on his friends. "All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." The stream of providence may run sometimes smooth, and sometimes troubled; sometimes gleam with sunshine, and at others, be overcast with clouds; but whatever its surface, it is still the same unchangeable current of kindness and love, toward the Lord's converted people. Unto this, all collateral events are rendered tributary; and along this, the godly are floated incessantly toward their eternal salvation. With the Father of lights, is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning, but He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "His mercy, toward them that fear him, is from everlasting to everlasting."

Could we see all things in one view, as the Om-

¹ Rom. viii. 28.

niscient seeth them, then, even when affairs appear the darkest, we should not wish them otherwise than they are. Oh! that we realised this! that we acted up to our principles.

But, Secondly, let us cease from man in a *political* respect. In time of war or peril, let us not place our confidence in any distinguished leader, naval or military, as if he were invincible : but letting go an arm of flesh, lean with all our strength on Him, who is the God of hosts or armies ; and with whom it is the same to save by one, as by another. How often are we reminded, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong : but that success in every enterprise cometh from the Lord. In the various victories obtained by the Israelites over the powerful nations of Canaan, it is uniformly declared, that the *Lord* delivered the latter into their hand.

Again, in times of perplexity and alarm, should wise rulers, ruling in the fear of GOD, be placed in authority over us, let us be thankful to him for this important benefit. But let us not substitute our rulers for the universal GOVERNOR : as if *they* could do either good or evil of themselves. It is undoubtedly our duty to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him : ' they being God's vicegerents ; for He, not the people, as some erroneously affirm, is the source of all legitimate power : As it is written,—“ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be, are ordained of

God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive unto themselves damnation.”¹ We are furthermore commanded “to *pray* for our rulers,”² “and not speak evil of them;”³ but then, we should not *deify* them; should not make them the ground of our hope and rejoicing, as respects the kingdom; but looking away from Man, place our dependence on HIM, who is the blessed and only potentate; who ruleth in the kingdom of men, setting up one, and putting down another: who bringeth princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity: who defeateth the counsel of the wisest Abithophel, and giveth wisdom to the weak and simple. Has not past experience taught us, that those we esteemed the firmest and most trust-worthy, bend as a reed before the torrent, in the hour of trial? And did not the Lord in every such case plainly rebuke our creature-dependence. Ah! then, let us for the future obey his command “Put not your trust in princes, nor in *any* child of man; for, verily, every man, even at his best estate, is altogether vanity.” Let us transfer our affiance to the “Wonderful Counsellor, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice;”⁴ and say of him, “He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence, I shall not moved.” In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge. Trust in him at all

¹ Rom. xiii. 12.² 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.³ Acts xxiii. 5.⁴ Prov. viii. 15.

times, ye people ; pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us.

It is not talent, nor statesmanship, nor powerful alliances, nor navies, nor armies, nor eloquent orators :—it is not any, or all of these, that form the true glory and muniments of a nation. What can any wisdom, or any bulwarks avail against the blast of the Almighty ? “ There is no king saved by the multitude of an host : a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.”¹ “ Only righteousness exalteth a nation ” :² “ only by righteousness is the throne established.”³ Righteousness is attended by the blessing of the LORD, and that alone gives national prosperity. Let us then cease from man, and apply ourselves to prayer, that the Lord may in mercy rain righteousness upon us. “ Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses ; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.”⁴ “ *He* maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that he is GOD. He will be exalted

¹ Psalm xxxiii. 16.

² Prov. xiv. 34.

³ Ibid xvi. 12.

⁴ Psalm xx. 7. Though most reluctant to call in question the conduct of many illustrious individuals, intensely devoted to the interests of Protestantism, the Author cannot help doubting, whether, in the event, that high and holy cause is likely to be advantaged by such expedients, as ‘ Conservative dinners,’ and similar assemblages. In all such, there is generally much excess, and consequently sin. If sin, God is displeased, and the object so far frustrated. ‘ Banquetings,’ are amongst those things denounced in Scripture. 1 Pet. iv. 3. Can such things prosper then ? No. Rather let us, in our truly solemn and critical circumstances, adopt the course enjoined by Je-

among the heathen, he will be exalted in the earth.”¹

Let Satan and his confederates do their worst ; —let them stir up and assemble the nations in one wicked armament against the Lord, and against his people,—let them rush against the camp of the saints, like the rushing of many waters,—let them cover the land like a cloud and a storm,—yet faith, heroic faith can bid them all defiance,—and say, “Associate yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces, gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces, take counsel together, and it shall come to nought ; speak the word, and it shall not stand ; for God is with us !” “*Surely*, the wrath of man shall praise Him ; the remainder of wrath He shall restrain.”

It is the glorious privilege of the believer to live superior to the fluctuating sea of worldly politic and to be exempted from those sudden fears,

hovah in the prophet Joel—“Therefore, also, now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even unto me, *with all your heart*, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.”—“Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly,” &c. “Then,” (and not till then) “will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.” Then, only “will the Lord do great things” for us. See Joel ii. 12—21.

Accordingly, a correspondent of the London Record—‘a clergyman of great age and experience, recommends all ministers of the gospel, to sound an alarm from their several pulpits, as with one voice urging the people to humiliation and repentance. ‘The times,’ he says, ‘call for humiliation for sin on the one hand, and a concentrated repugnance to the encroachments of a Popish faction on the other.’ And most unquestionable is that which he adds—‘It is indeed *only* by humiliation for sin, that we can hope to avert the judgments of God upon a sinful people.’

¹ Note XXX.

panics and amazements, wherewith the minds of the multitude are wont to be shaken, "as the trees of the wood are shaken with the wind." While the sons of Belial rage and bluster, asserting what mighty and terrible things *they*, forsooth, shall bring to pass ; as if they were omnipotent, and there were no Supreme Director of the universe, to control their machinations :—the child of Faith, standing on the high vantage-ground of Scripture, like the angel in the sun, can from that commanding eminence, look down upon these petty tyrants and troublers of the earth, as so many puppets in the hand of Omnipotence, and laugh them to scorn. The Christian is assured that, let man say what he may, yet unless GOD say it also, it is a vain word ; that "THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH ;" doing whatsoever he pleaseth, both in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : that the Captain of Salvation, "the Captain of the Lord's hosts," being made the head over all things to the church, no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper, but all things, however apparently hostile, contribute to his people's prosperity. "Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ? and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." ¹

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 29. 'If God be with us, who can be against us ? Let tyrants rage, let the world roar, let hell groan, and the devil bel-

Thirdly, let us cease from man in *Spiritual* things. We should not place implicit confidence in any human teacher, however eminent. "Call no man Rabbi, (or master) for one is your master, even Christ." It is our duty to follow the Christian minister so far as he speaks according to the inspired oracles; and we "should search the Scriptures daily" to ascertain whether he does so or not. While he so speaks, "he that heareth him, heareth Christ; and he that despiseth him, despiseth not him only, but also the Father that sent him." The King is insulted in the person of his Ambassador.

At the same time, the various pestilent heresies which have infested Christendom in all ages, our own not excepted, teach us this lesson very impressively—not to be deceived by any reputation of the person propagating a doctrine; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Pious men are not always judicious; nor are those always pious who appear to be so. They are generally persons of piety and ability, whom the Adversary selects as his decoys in perverting others. No deceivers prove so dangerous to the church, as these fallen stars.¹ For who would listen to novelties, coming from one devoid of sanctity or talent? Would the elect be deceived

low; we, under the protection of such a companion, shall be secure: and we shall sing with him, who slew the lion, the bear, and Goliath. "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me round about."—BISHOP HALL.

¹ Rev. ix. 1.

by the openly sinful? No: in "vain is the net spread in the *sight* of any bird." The more able and holy then, persons are, if they be not sound in the faith, the more are they to be avoided. It is a true saying, that great men have sometimes great faults. When the metal has run very deeply in one portion of the mould, it is apt to be proportionably shallow in another.

Once more: let us cease from *ourselves*. Let us not lean on our own understanding, our own strength or purity of principle—the stone on which an apostle stumbled—but be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this—that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD, which executeth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the LORD." Let us put no confidence in the flesh—no reliance on our own righteousness; but put on by a living faith the righteousness of IMMANUEL—the only righteousness in which, being clothed, we shall not be found naked: the only wedding garment in which we can be admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

In fine, dear reader, Let your life be by faith in the Son of God, who loved you, and gave himself for you. Let all your springs be in him. Draw from his fulness all needed supplies of

grace and strength. This is a fountain whose waters fail not. When we make the LORD our portion, and commit the keeping of our souls to Him, in well doing; and live as daily pensioners on his bounty, like the Church in the wilderness; then, whatever may ensue, we have the strong consolation of having "cast all our care upon him, who careth for us." Is it low with us in temporal things? Then we can live upon him, who feedeth the ravens, and the cattle upon a thousand hills: "who giveth food to all flesh," and hath promised to his people, that "he will never leave them, nor forsake them." Are we weak? Then we can lay hold of him by faith and prayer, in whom is strength everlasting, and whose strength "is made perfect in our weakness." Do friends prove fickle, or depart? We can console ourselves in him, who is a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother, who is the brother born for adversity." Does man menace? We can encourage ourselves in GOD. In a word, does the whole world frown upon us? We can get us to our strong tower, and delight ourselves in the smile of him, 'in whose countenance heaven lieth.' Oh! what an invaluable privilege! What an unutterable relief, when the soul, having in a sense of its own inability fitly to perform her duties, and conquer her various and powerful opponents, been nearly overwhelmed, and crushed to despair, is enabled to realize the all-sufficiency of JESUS, and roll upon him her entire burden. An instant sunshine flashes upon the

heart, and in the bosom previously agitated like the troubled sea, there succeeds a great calm, even that "peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

Let us then, endeavour, in the practice of prayer and meditation, to live in the uninterrupted exercise of this wonder-working principle of Faith. This alone will give us the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Let us be constantly "looking unto Jesus," our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Let him be our strength, our arm, our portion, our joy, our all. We cannot expect too much from Him, or too little from the world. However we are supported and blessed, still, it is Christ that supports and blesses us. He sustains all that sustains us.¹ He is the God of ALL comfort.² Bread cannot nourish, sleep cannot recruit, medicine cannot cure, legislatures cannot provide, fleets nor armies defend,—nor any creature profit us, except by his especial blessing. Nay, the bread of life itself—His own word—cannot benefit the soul, but is a letter that killeth, unless accompanied by the Spirit of life. All are but dead instruments in the hand of the living GOD. All, but the created vehicles whereby he is pleased to communicate his manifold grace. And whatsoever we receive through their instrumentality, we might, if he so ordained, receive immediately from himself. He

¹ Bishop REYNOLDS.

² 2 Cor . 3.

is all-sufficient. All creatures, before him, are less than nothing, and vanity.¹

Yet he graciously vouchsafes to mingle himself with his children here below, to tabernacle among them : as once by his Son, so now by his Spirit ; and to shed abroad in their hearts a delightful feeling of his loving presence. Let his children show themselves grateful to him, for his unspeakable condescension. Let them evince their gratitude by rejoicing in him, by walking worthy of him unto all pleasing ; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. While many say, “Who will shew us any good ?” let them exclaim, “LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us !” “Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” “Let them set their affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.”

“Is it a time to receive olive-yards, and vineyards ?” to be covetous and ambitious, seeking our portion in this life, spreading ourselves over the earth like creeping shrubs—when the whole frame-work of society is trembling, and hell moved from beneath, and pouring her mists and myrmidons over the face of the world ? Surely, if ever there was a period, since the commencement of time, when it behoved us to be “spiritually-minded, and to walk circumspectly,” it is the present.

Whether the view of a personal coming of Christ, prior to the millennium, be correct, or not, one thing

¹ Note XXXI.

must be admitted, it *may* be correct. Much is to be said in its support ; and many wise and spiritual men have accordingly embraced it. We cannot deny too, that his second coming is an event to which the eye of the Church is repeatedly directed in Scripture : that we are also warned to watch and be ready for it ; for that the day of the Lord so cometh, “ as a thief in the night ; ” and if Christians in the early ages of Christianity—nearly two thousand years since—were thus enjoined, how much more forcibly does the injunction apply to us, “ upon whom the ends of the world are come.”¹

Whatever view we form of the question, at all events, a speedy coming of Christ, of a sufficiently tremendous character, is confidently anticipated by all,—(and their number is not small in these days) who diligently search the sacred Scriptures, and compare their predictions with passing occurrences.

Mankind for the most part, however, are living at ease, caring for none of these things. Like the ungodly, in the days of Noah, they eat and drink, marry, and are given in marriage, while they regard not the work of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands. They live without God

¹ ‘ Yet say some, it cannot be even now very near, for much remains to be previously accomplished. But God does not act according to our conclusions. He can cut short his work in righteousness. Yet let us allow the truth contained in the objection. His coming by death is the same to you in effect, as his coming at the last day. As soon as you are dead, as to *you*, the prophecies are all accomplished, and your state is fixed. There is no pardon, no prayer, after death,—after death, the judgment.’—Rev. W. JAY.

in the world ; dead while they live. How awful ! Were we credibly informed by astronomers, that a comet from the confines of Creation was rapidly approaching our planet, and would certainly soon strike and destroy it, how intense an alarm would the intelligence occasion ! How anxiously would all be looking out for the dreadful visitant, and preparing for their doom ! And, yet, we have a more sure word of prophecy, that a far more terrible occurrence still, even the day of God's righteous vengeance and indignation : a day that shall burn to the lowest hell, and consume all the ungodly of the earth as dross, approacheth ; but who appears concerned ? Who converses of the direful catastrophe ? Who would be found preparing for it ?

“ Seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness ; looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”¹ “ Let your moderation be known unto all men : the Lord is at hand.” “ Arise ye,

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 11—14

and depart : for this is not your rest, for it is polluted." It will destroy you even with a sore destruction. Let us remove our treasures hence, as from an abode devoted to destruction. Let our treasure be in heaven ; " for where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also." Let the Lord Jesus Christ be our treasure, as we are his. He calls his people, his " peculiar treasure,"¹ his " jewels."² Let us not allow our lamps to expire, or our holy garments to drag in the dust, " but have our loins girded, and our lamps burning, and be ourselves like men that wait for their Lord, when he shall return from the wedding." " Behold," he says, " I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."³

The trees in a grove, or the plants in a garden, when limited for room below, shoot the more aloft. So should we, cramped and hindered in our earthly tendencies, grow the more in grace, and permit the vigour of our affections to expand toward heaven. Every living temple of God should resemble the temple of Ezekiel, in which there was " an enlarging upwards."⁴

Thus we shall live superior to the world ; its sins and its sorrows, its smiles and its frowns ; so we shall deprive earth of its power to hurt us, and realize even below, a kind of angelic felicity.

Walking with GOD in faith and prayer, recogni-

¹ Exodus xix. 15.

² Mal. iii. 17.

³ Rev. xvi. 15.

⁴ Ezek. xli. 7.

zing his hand in every event, associating him with every lovely object ; and yielding ourselves wholly to the motions of his good Spirit on our minds, we shall be favoured with continual sweet tokens of his favour ; and eventually through grace, be exalted to a never-fading inheritance with him in glory. AMEN.

Help, O Lord !—thine arm put forth ;
Faith seems fading from the earth :
Wicked friends and fiend-like men
Make thy world a demon's den.

By this badge were men to prove
Thy true saints—their mutual love :
Ah ! if all by this were tried,
Who would stand on safety's side ?

Even in those who seem thine own
Satan hath his venom sown,
Thus, while foemen thicken round,
Traitors in the camp are found.

Zion ! when shalt thou have peace ?
Shall thy conflicts never cease ?
From the sad, heart-sick'ning sight,
Lord, to thee I bend my flight.

Shield, O, shield me in thine arms,
From a world of dire alarms :
Taught his vanity to scan,
I henceforth would cease from Man.

Thou sufficient art alone ;
Altogether lovely ONE !
All true good thou dost condense ;
Pure essential excellence !

Shew me thou, what I should see,
Make me all I ought to be :
Then may I, life's exile o'er.
See, enjoy thee, evermore.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. p. 1.

‘THROUGHOUT what is called the Christian world, there will be a contest between impiety and religion; the former everywhere is gathering strength, and whenever it breaks loose, the foundations of human society will be shaken. Do not suppose that you are safe from this danger because you are blest with a pure creed, a reformed ritual, and a tolerant Church ! Even here the standard of impiety has been set up, and the drummers who beat the march of intellect through your streets, lanes, and market-places, are enlisted under it.

‘ The struggle between Popery and Protestantism is renewed. And let no man deceive himself by a vain reliance upon the increased knowledge or improved humanity of the times ! wickedness is ever the same : and you never were in so much danger from moral weakness.

‘ Co-existent with these struggles is that between the feudal system of society, as variously modified

throughout Europe, and the levelling principle of democracy. That principle is actively and indefatigably at work in these kingdoms, allying itself as occasion may serve, with Popery or with Dissent, with profligacy or with hypocrisy, ready confederates, each having its own sinister views, but all acting to one straight-forward end. Your rulers meanwhile seem to be trying that experiment with the British Constitution, which Mithridates is said to have tried upon his own : they suffer poison to be administered in daily doses, as if they expected that by such a course the public mind would at length be rendered poison-proof !

‘ The first of these struggles will affect all Christendom, the third may once again shake the monarchies of Europe. The second will be felt widely ; but nowhere with more violence than in Ireland, that unhappy country, wherein your government, after the most impolitic measures into which weakness was ever deluded, or pusillanimity intimidated, seems to have abdicated its functions, contenting itself with the semblance of an authority which it has wanted either wisdom or courage to exert.

‘ There is a fourth danger, the growth of your manufacturing system ; and this is peculiarly your own. You have a great and increasing population, exposed at all times by the fluctuations of trade to suffer the severest privations in the midst of a rich and luxurious society, under little or no restraint from religious principle, and if not absolutely

disaffected to the institutions of the country, certainly not attached to them : a class of men aware of their numbers and of their strength ; experienced in all the details of combination, improvident when they are in the receipt of good wages, yet feeling themselves injured when those wages, during some failure of demand, are so lowered as no longer to afford the means of comfortable subsistence,—and directing against the government and the laws of the country their resentment and indignation for the evils which have been brought upon them by competition and the spirit of rivalry in trade. They have among them intelligent and daring minds ; and you have already seen how perilously they may be wrought upon by seditious journalists, and seditious orators in a time of distress.

‘ On what do you rely for security against these dangers ? On public opinion ? You might as well calculate upon the constancy of wind and weather in this uncertain climate. On the progress of knowledge ? It is such knowledge as serves only to facilitate the course of delusion. On the laws ? The law, which should be like a sword in a strong hand, is weak as a bulrush if it be feebly administered in a time of danger. On the people ? They are divided. On the parliament ? Every faction will be fully and formidably represented there. On the Government ? It suffers itself to be insulted and defied at home, and abroad it has shown itself incapable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity with its allies, so far has it been divested of

power by the usurpation of the press. . . . A press which is not only without restraint, but without responsibility ; and in the management of which those men will always have most power who have least probity, and have most completely divested themselves of all sense of honour, and all regard for truth.

‘The root of all your evils is the sinfulness of the nation. The principle of duty is weakened among you, that of moral obligation is loosened ; that of religious obedience is destroyed. Look at the worldliness of all classes : the greediness of the rich,—the misery of the poor,—and the appalling depravity which is spreading among the lower classes through town and country.’—ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq. See ‘Colloquies.’

‘The moral deluge has begun ; and though the dry land still appears, and though the mountains and hills are still uncovered, yet the waters rise higher and higher every day ; and many heedless and thoughtless until now, acknowledge that the only sure refuge is the ark of true religion.’—REV. H. WOODWARD’S ESSAYS.

‘It is impossible for any person to look on the present aspect of providence, with an observing, and especially a religious eye, without being persuaded that our lot has fallen on critical times ; times which teem with important events, affecting the interests of society in general, and of the

church of God in particular. At no distant period, good men were inclined to hope that the existing agitation was on the surface of society, and that it would soon subside, and leave things in their former state of tranquillity. That day is gone by ; and there are few, I believe, how opposite soever their opinions may be of the moral character of the times, who are not now come to the contrary conclusion, and who are not convinced that this ferment is increasing, that its exciting causes are deep and widely extended, that they are as yet but partially developed, and that many days must elapse before the storm shall have spent its rage, and the agitated waves wrought themselves into repose.'—REV. DR. M^c CRIE'S SERMONS.

'The state of our country cannot but occasion much anxiety. When Lord Stanley, so likely from his previous situation to know the truth, stated the present (Jan. 12, 1835,) as a 'period which he considered to be a crisis of fear, of anxiety, and of danger,' and when Lord Grey in a letter to Lord Ebrington, had previously stated the serious difficulties of governing the country, and the importance of not being 'urged by a constant and active pressure from without to the adoption of measures, the necessity of which had not been fully proved,' and in the present feverish state of the public mind, who can be without fears for his country.'—REV. E. BICKERSTETH'S "Guide to the Prophecies."

‘ It seems at first sight very improbable, that at the time when there is an extended revival of religion, and a vast increase of faithful ministers, and growth of all kinds of exertion to spread the Gospel, and to do good ; such things should be the prelude and preparation for judgments and wrath upon the nations. But the growth of wickedness with the growth of good ; and the plain predictions of God’s word (Rev. xiv. 6, 7. Isai. xi. 4, 9.) and the past history of Noah’s preaching before the deluge, and the prophets raised up before the first destruction of Jerusalem, and the Apostle’s going forth from Jerusalem before its second destruction, may lead us to see that this is the thing which God has foretold, and the past history of the Church has illustrated.’—*Idem*.

‘ Even the most careless observer cannot refrain from noticing and acknowledging the existence of a general fermentation certainly throughout all Europe, perhaps, indeed, well nigh throughout the whole world. When the spirit of innovating anarchy is thus distinguished by its close alliance with the blasphemous spirit of infidelity ; and when, by his ominous junction with such associates, the Roman Man of Sin once more vindicates to himself the accurate prophetic description of ‘ the lawless one,’ we cannot but suspect that matters are in a state of preparation for that final tremendous overthrow of God’s enemies, which is the theme of so many inspired prophecies. The very politician of the world,

purely in the way of cause and effect, anticipates a wide wasting war of principles, and a series of political convulsions upon a scale of appalling magnitude : and with his anticipations, the devout student of prophecy, deriving his expectations from a higher and surer source, fully and unreservedly concurs.'—REV. MR. FABER, quoted by MR. BICKERSTETH, in "Practical Guide to the Prophecies." pp. 121, 122.

' Regard our own country at this moment. The heavens are lowering over us. In many districts in the North, although the season of harvest is past, the crop is still in the fields, and the prices of almost all the necessaries of life are rapidly rising. In the commercial world there is a painful apprehension, nearly amounting to a panic ; whilst the political horizon is so obscure, that " men's hearts are failing them for fear, not knowing what is coming upon them." If we turn our eyes to the sister island, there, alas ! we see a distracted country, man under worse than Egyptian bondage ; a bondage, whose chains no one but he who is " mighty to save," can break.' ' Through the whole of Europe, in almost every part, either open infidelity, Papal superstition, vain and powerless Neology, or mere formal Protestantism, having a name to live, but dead at heart, cover the land.'
Rev. J. H. STEWART. December, 1836.

' The prevailing spirit of our times is that of

infidelity and apostacy ; a spirit of pretended illumination, but, in reality, of the blindest presumption ; a spirit of opposition to the plain word of God, and of arbitrary determination upon good and evil ; a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere natural reason above the revealed wisdom of God. Among the great mass of nominal Christians, both of the learned sort and of the illiterate, it has long been taken for granted, that the doctrine of our native corruption is a gloomy fancy, and that of salvation by the blood of Christ an antiquated and by-gone notion. It is held, that the miserable tinsel of exterior decorum, the mere flimsy garniture of selfishness, is quite sufficient to satisfy God ; and that a Divine mediator is not at all necessary to the salvation of men. Yes, my brethren, a review of the Christian world, in the present day, is enough to make every pious spirit shudder. The spirit of antichrist is prevailing in the world to such an extent as it has never done heretofore ; and it is almost time to join in with the complaint of the Psalmist, “ Help, Lord ! for the godly man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from the children of men ! ” Psalm xii. 1. F. W. KRUMMACHER, D. D.

The foregoing synopsis of the views of eminent men, of various religious denominations, relative to the present posture of affairs, may assist the reader in forming his own judgment, how far the view taken by the author on the subject is correct,

NOTE II. p. 8.

ROMAN Catholic communities have invariably been distinguished by their disregard of the Sabbath. Accordingly, in the southern, western, and south-western provinces of Ireland, the desecration of the holy day by the selling of articles of food and of apparel, and the holding of markets, independently of the driving of all manner of vehicles, and the playing at all sorts of games, and all sorts of instruments, is such as to shock every pious mind, especially if unaccustomed to witness such paganish spectacles. We grieve to observe that this state of things, however, is not confined to Ireland. For, as Popery spreads, Sabbath-breaking spreads proportionably over Britain also. 'Sabbath-breakers by thousands,' says a recent writer, 'are showing in the unspeakably insipid procession of gay equipages in Hyde-park, how well they can employ the bounties of God to insult him by their ostentatious violation of his express command. Then, when they have languished through the wearisome monotony of the holy day, they achieve at night by the luxurious banquetting, by gatherings of the beautiful and the gay, by the splendour of illumination, by music and song, an atheistical forgetfulness of God, shake off for a moment the ennui of fashionable existence, or disburthen themselves of the annoyance of conscience; while, as another valuable end, to refresh the memory on a dying bed,

they effect the destruction of thousands, their unhappy dependents, who are sauntering at the doors of public-houses, while in attendance on their midnight revels. The poorer classes are not slow to follow their wholesome example. From six o'clock in the morning to the hour of public prayer, the public-houses and the gin-shops are open to their customers, and there, crowds are consuming in early debauch the gains of the week. Evening renews the revel, and the bacchanalian orgies of the poor rise up before God in harmonious alliance with the less gross, but not less ungodly, festivities of the rich.'—From the Rev. BAPTIST NOEL's Letters.

On the Dublin and Kingstown Railway, the number of passengers on the Lord's day considerably exceeds that on any other: while on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the reverse of this takes place—a notable illustration of the different influence, as respects the observance of the Sabbath, of Popery and Protestantism. In Ireland, the former unhappily predominates; in England, the latter.

' Though we have not the book of Sports, the awful profanation of a former era, yet we have the Sunday Press, a name unknown to our forefathers, with its eighteen London and one Country Journals, circulating probably ninety thousand Newspapers each Sabbath. We have Sunday meetings for secular objects; and all the Sunday travelling, traffic, and vain pleasures, by which, in this our

land, God is on every Sabbath so daringly provoked.'—From the Rev. E. BICKERSTETH's Church Missionary Sermon. p. 10, 11.

NOTE III. p. 10.

' A COMMITTEE of about fifty members of the imperial parliament was lately appointed to examine into the use of ardent spirits in England. They made a long and able report, and attributed most of the crime and poverty in that country to the use of spirituous liquors.'

The author has been favoured by a friend with the following curious and important calculation. ' Ardent spirits cost the United Kingdom £50,000,000 annually ; and occasion expenses and losses of various kinds, amounting to £50,000,000 more ; total 100 millions : which saved for two years would amount to 200 millions. One half of this sum would fit out one million of ministers, to go abroad as Missionaries, while the other half would furnish each minister with 800 copies of the sacred Scriptures, at 2s. 6d. per copy. Thus then would be furnished a minister for every 800 persons on the globe, and every person be provided with a copy of the word of God. And the 100 millions, supplied yearly, would afford £100 per annum, for the support of each minister.'

It is stated, that ' there were in the course of the year 1835, 95,000 offenders committed to

prison in England and Wales ; and by an enquiry instituted in those districts where it was possible to make enquiry, it appears that four-fifths of the crime that has been committed may be traced to habits of drinking.'

It is further affirmed, that there has been in Ireland, during the last year, an *increase* of 1,750,137 gallons distilled ; and of 1,672,817 gallons consumed : ' one of the most tremendous facts ever recorded in history.'

NOTE IV. p. 18.

' FROM that tendency to deterioration lately noticed, these great fundamental truths began to be somewhat less prominent in the compositions of many of the leading divines before the time of the civil wars. During that period, however, the peculiar doctrines of Christianity were grievously abused by many of the sectaries, who were foremost in the commotions of those unhappy days ; who, while they talked copiously of the free grace of Christ, and the operations of the Holy Spirit, were by their lives an open scandal to the name of Christian. Towards the close of the last century, the divines of the established Church (whether it arose from the obscurity of their own views, or from a strong impression of former abuses, and of the evils which had resulted from them,) began to run into a different error. They professed to make it their

chief object to inculcate the moral and practical precepts of Christianity, which they conceived to have been before too much neglected ; but without sufficiently maintaining, often even without justly laying the grand foundation of a sinner's acceptance with God, or pointing out how the practical precepts of Christianity grew out of her peculiar doctrines, and are inseparably connected with them. By this fatal error, the very genius and essential nature of Christianity imperceptibly underwent a change. She no longer retained her peculiar characters, or produced that appropriate frame of spirit by which her followers had been characterized. *Facilis descensus.* The example thus set was followed during the present century, and its effect was aided by various causes already pointed out.' WILBERFORCE'S View, ch. IV.

NOTE V. p. 20.

HAS not Ireland contracted heavy guilt by withholding from her protestant clergy their legally appointed dues ? And this too at a time, when, as it is reported, the amazing sum of £25,000 has been contributed in one year, to support a popish demagogue in his schemes of destructive agitation. What saith the Scripture upon this point ? “ Will a man rob God ? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee ? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse : for

ye have robbed me; even this whole nation.”
(Malachi iii. 8, 9,

The same principle is enforced in the *New Testament* in such passages as the following, 1 Cor. ix. 7—14. Rom. xv. 27. Gal. vi. 6.

NOTE VI. p. 20.

‘AND there is a banding together of men of the most opposite principles and professions; of believing men with infidel men; of evangelical men with heretical men; of protestant men with Roman Catholic men; of men of great professing godliness with men of no godliness whatever; a banding of them, heart and hand, to overthrow the christian establishment of the country. And of this strange, unnatural, and mysterious banding, the bitter fruits are always appearing in our cities, and our towns, and our villages.’—DR. MACFARLANE, late Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

NOTE VII. p. 36.

In demonstration of the spread of Popery we quote the following particulars from public journals.

From the London Watchman of May 27, 1835.

‘Last week two hundred and twenty-six acres,

situated on Charwood Forest, were sold to the Rev. Mr. Hulme, Roman Catholic priest, residing at Loughborough, for the purpose of founding a Roman Catholic Monastery of the Jesuit Order.'

From the Dublin Record of July 1, 1835.

'MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS IN EDINBURGH. The Edinburgh papers contain a grand description of the admission of a number of ladies to the order of the 'Sisters of charity' on Tuesday week, in a splendid Roman Catholic chapel, which has lately been erected in the vicinity of that city, and dedicated to St. Margaret. The ceremonies were unusually imposing, the Right Rev. Dr. Carruthers sprinkled the holy water; Bishop Murdoch of Glasgow preached a sermon, in which he predicted the ultimate ascendancy of Popery once more in Scotland.'

It was stated last year in a Stafford paper, that some thousand pounds had been expended by the Vicar Apostolic of the papal see in the purchase of an extensive estate in the centre of England, formerly the property of some nobleman, for the purpose of founding thereupon a monastic institution.

*From the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for
Sept. 1835.*

'It is a subject of painful regret, that amidst the religious means and advantages by which the present period is distinguished, there should be too

much reason to apprehend that the system of Popery, with all its pernicious effects, is considerably on the increase in several parts of this kingdom.' (England.)

From the Leicester Journal.

‘ There never was a time, since England became a Protestant country, when the proselyting system of the Roman Catholics was more strenuously acted upon than at the present day. New chapels are built, large and stately houses are bought or erected for popish seminaries and colleges, preaching in the open air is resorted to, tracts are widely distributed, and, in short, no means are neglected to laugh (if they cannot reason) protestants out of countenance. At length, resistance has become not a matter of choice, but of necessity.’

From a Yorkshire paper.

‘ On Sunday the ninth ult. (Oct.) the prior of the popish college at Ampleforth, addressed a crowd of people in Helmley market-place. The address lasted upwards of an hour, and at the conclusion of it he distributed a number of tracts; and was then drawn in his phaeton by the persons assembled, to the inn. The prior preached the Sunday following at Stone-grave, opposite the clergyman’s house. Indeed, his visits have extended to most of the surrounding villages.’

The Rev. J. Cummings, in a speech delivered at

Exeter Hall, London, in May 1835, made the following statements.

‘ The *Roman Catholic Magazine* itself proved the increase of popery, for it spake of the improved style of architecture, and the additional number their chapels. That Magazine spake also of the expected arrival of “ *his lordship*,” Dr. Baines, at Bath, with a model of St. Peter’s at Rome, to be copied from, in the erection of a new Cathedral at Bath. It was also stated that on one Sunday Dr. Baines administered the sacrament to ninety persons, of whom eighty-two were converts from Protestantism, of Liverpool, Manchester, and neighbouring places ; the emissaries of popery collected upwards of £500. in the courses of three or four services ; yet it was said that popery was not on the increase. The papists were gathering rapidly towards the heart of protestantism. In Rathbone-place, and in several spots in London, popish Tract Societies were established, the agents of which even stood at the doors of a Dissenting Chapel at Paddington, and distributed their tracts. There were nearly a hundred popish chapels in Scotland, besides a nunnery and several colleges and schools.’

From the Inverness Journal.

‘ The speeches delivered at the Protestant meetings, which have been held in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and other places ; the different publications circulated by the Reformation Societies, and

the publications of Catholics themselves, have placed the fact of the increase of Popery beyond all doubt. The Catholic Directory for 1833, tells us, that in the year 1645, according to some accounts, more than sixteen families of Roman Catholics could not be found in all the Lowlands. Now, in a single town—in Glasgow alone, there are two Roman Catholic bishops, 30,000 souls in the Romish Communion, and four priests or friars to superintend them : while in Edinburgh we find one bishop and five clergymen assiduously employed in circulating their principles. Our readers are probably aware, that the Reformation Society published a map, in the year 1833, which was intended to exhibit a view of the numbers and positions of the Popish Chapels and Schools, both in England and in Scotland, and which was drawn up, we believe, principally from an examination of the published statements of the Roman Catholics themselves. According to this map, we find that in England and Wales, between the years 1824 and 1833, there was an increase of sixty-five chapels : the number in 1824 being 358, and in 1833, 423. When the map was drawn up, there were in Lancashire alone, 87 chapels, and 11 public seminaries and colleges ; in Yorkshire 52 chapels ; and in Middlesex, 14 seminaries and colleges. In Scotland the increase between the years 1829 and 1833 was most extraordinary ; in 1829 there were 51 chapels in all Scotland : in 1833, there were 74 : making an increase in 4 years, of 23 chapels ; so that if the

increase should continue in the same proportion, the whole number of Roman Catholic chapels in Scotland would be doubled every eight or nine years. There are indeed many protestants who either deny the increase of Popery, or who assert that there is no danger to the Protestant religion, from its rapid extension; and who, on this ground, refuse to make any efforts to arrest its progress. But the evidence of the ablest and most influential among the Catholics is not to be set aside. And we find the Bishop of Edinburgh, at the opening of the Conventional Church, thus expressing himself :—

‘ Since the period of the Reformation, there was a time when one solitary Catholic Priest wandered over the length and breadth of the kingdom; now your places of worship adorn the cities of the land, and are widely scattered over the face of the country; now you, at noon-day worship the Almighty with almost all the splendour and solemnity of Catholic times, and Catholic countries. Scarce now does the year roll over in which *several* edifices are not reared, and dedicated to God according to the form and faith of the Catholic Church. You are assembled, my friends, in the first conventual chapel that has dared to raise its head in this kingdom since the Reformation. Yes, my fellow-Catholics, if to day St. Margaret’s stand alone, the time may not be far distant when the increase of similar institutions may be proclaimed with as much joy as I, at this moment, experience in alluding to its solitary existence.’

In addition to these particulars it may be stated, that a nunnery and monastery have been erected near St. Leonard's, Sussex; having attached to them twenty acres of ground. And who is not aware of the multiplication of similar edifices all over the empire? Who has not heard of the establishment of the order of La Trappe in the county of Waterford, and of kindred institutions in Dublin, Drogheda, Newry, Belfast, Limerick; in short, every considerable town in the kingdom?

Nor are these efforts confined to these kingdoms. In Canada, in Newfoundland, in Ohio, in Illinois, in South America, in India; in a word, almost everywhere is the Romish Church making simultaneous exertions. She may exclaim,

'Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris!'

'The Romanists' writes Bishop Chase, 'are making unusual and almost unheard-of exertions in Illinois, and in Missouri contiguous to that diocese. Of the six hundred missionaries under the garb of the *'priesthood'* of Christ, who have been within a few months sent over from the Pope to the United States, to aid the cause of that corrupted communion, more than one half are to take their stand in and about the city of St. Louis, and on the waters of the Mississippi.'

Dr. Mc Ilwaine, Bishop of Ohio, in his speech before the meeting of the Church Missionary Society in London, 1835, is reported to have affirmed, that, since the year 1792, when the number of Roman Catholics in the whole of the

then American States did not exceed 18,000, they had increased, according to the accounts of some, to 800,000, though he thought he should be nearer the correct statement, if he estimated the whole at present at 550,000.'

The *Ami de la Religion* says—' A new mission has been appointed to go to the South Seas under the Bishop of Arilopolis, and directed by missionaries from the diocese of Lyons. One of them has received special powers from the Propaganda. M. Pompalier has been created Bishop *in partibus* of Maronea, and Apostolic Vicar for Polynesia and the Western Ocean. This prelate, who is only thirty-five years of age, has just arrived at Lyons from Rome, and will be accompanied by four or five missionaries.'

' The testimony of Bishop Broughton as to New South Wales, was given at the monthly meeting of the Christian Knowledge Society in January last to this effect; protestantism was much endangered in the Colony; the efforts of Rome in that country, are almost incredible. The country is traversed by the agents of Rome. I earnestly desire means of counteracting these machinations.'—From Rev. E. BICKERSTETH'S 'Remarks of Popery.'

The following extract from the 'Report of the Committee appointed by the last general assembly, to inquire into the present state of Popery in Scotland,' is a document of indisputable authority on the point in question.

‘—But while Popery a century ago was almost entirely confined to the more remote and secluded parts of the country, it is now seen, not only in the same influence in those sequestered situations, but in a still more prominent form in the most influential towns in Scotland; there splendid chapels are rapidly rising, and the idolatrous ceremonies of the Romish Church are celebrated with increasing pomp and circumstance; and the number of Missionary Priests opening new stations in the adjoining country, is augmented every year. The great increase of Popery in the towns of the Lowlands is mainly to be ascribed to the continual influx of Irish labourers, which has of late been so considerable, that the city of Glasgow may be said to contain more subjects of the Church of Rome, than, in 1679, could be found by the Pope in the whole extent of Scotland. And in Dundee, where the Popish congregation did not, twenty years ago, number more than fifty individuals, it contains now, about five thousand souls: the annual number of baptisms being about two hundred and thirty. But we must not omit to notice, that in their official publications, the office-bearers of the Church of Rome mention the number of their people, in several of our towns, as being in some degree, increased by apostasy from the Protestant faith. Whether the number of these be considerable or not, who have become converts in this country, to the Romish creed, the fact of the increasing numbers located in our towns, and inha-

biting the rural districts of our country, professing what we fully believe to be a system of idolatry, is an evil to be deeply deplored. These numerous individuals are placed in a situation of imminent peril, while living in deep and fatal error; and great is the responsibility of a Christian Church, entrusted with the superintendence of a country like this, if it leaves them to travel onwards to eternity undisturbed and unwarned. But, besides the injury done to the victims of delusion, by thus disregarding their condition, manifold are the evils which may thence arise to our own people, who, by our indifference, will be insensibly led to regard that Popery against which their fathers contended unto the death, as by no means fraught with serious danger to the souls of men. This will be found to prove, in many cases, a fatal preparation for facilitating the proselyting exertions, in which the emissaries of Rome are putting forth unwearied energy in different parts of the country.'

'The popish hierarchy connected with Scotland became extinct in 1603, by the death of James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, who died in Paris in 1603. From that period until 1694, no Popish Bishop had any connexion with this country. At the present moment, however, the church of Rome has, in Scotland, four Bishops, nominally connected with extinct bishoprics in other parts of the world, and to which the Pope assumes the right of nominating, but officiating in this country, which their commission designates, '*in partibus infidelium*'

as Vicars apostolic of the Roman see. Under them, about seventy Priests officiate, at least in sixty regular chapels, and supply at stated times with the rites of Romish worship, twenty-five occasional stations. Besides all this, they have a considerable number of schools, several of which are taught on the Sabbath evenings, where their youth are carefully instructed in the doctrines of the popish faith. They have also, a well-endowed college, within six miles of Aberdeen, where young men, judged suited for Missionary labour, are educated gratuitously. And, what would scarcely be credited some years ago, they have lately opened a convent in the city of Edinburgh, partly intended to be devoted to the purposes of education, and partly to those of charity; in both views well adapted for the indirect propagation of popery. While the machinery for the maintenance and propagation of their doctrines is becoming every year more extensive, the most strenuous efforts are made to disguise the real character and ultimate designs of the Romish Church. This will surprise none who remember the past history of the Jesuits, an order now restored, though formerly its abolition was according to the loud voice, not of Protestant, but of popish, Europe, disturbed in every quarter by their dark machinations, astonishing power, and ceaseless intrigues. The Church of Rome, in its directory for the year, has actually told the world this disgraceful fact, that Protestant gentlemen are among the supporters of its Schools, and among the contri-

butors to the erection of its chapels; and we believe this exists to a still more extensive degree than they have yet ventured to tell the world.'

NOTE VIII. p. 40.

Extract from a Canon of Pope Urban the Eighth.

'Non eos homicidos arbitramur, quibus, adversus excommunicatos zelo catholicæ matris ecclesiæ ardentibus, aliquos eorum trucidasse contigerit.'—
(Taken from the London Standard.)

'In the third council of Lateran it was decreed, (27th Canon) that the faithful are bound to destroy heretics.' Labb. Vol. x. p. 1522.

Extract from the great Lateran Council, held by Pope Innocent III. in the year 1215, which is made a part of the Canon Law. It was attended by 2 Patriarchs, 77 Metropolitans, 412 Bishops, and 800 Abbots and Priests; and is styled by the Roman Church, the 12th General Council. 'And let the secular powers be warned and induced, and if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, what offices soever they are in, that as they desire to be reputed and taken for believers, so they publicly *take an oath* for the defence of the faith, that they will study in good earnest to exterminate to their utmost power, from the lands subject to their jurisdiction, all heretics, denoted by the Church.—(From the Protestant Layman. By James STUART, Esq. LL. D. Appendix No. III.) The same principle

is maintained by BOSSUET, Bishop of Meaux. Vide Jurieu's Pastoral Letters, Letter 1.

The notes annexed to the Douay version of the Scriptures contain this comment on Deut. xvii. 12. 'Here we see what authority God was pleased to give to the Church-guides of the Old Testament, in deciding, without appeal, all controversies relating to the law; and punishing with death, such as proudly refused to obey their decisions. And surely he has not done less for the Church-guides of the New Testament.'

'In 1816, they (the Romish Bishops) brought in a more vigorous instrument; for they then introduced into Ireland and published the *Rhemish Notes*. Of these notes, I will say nothing. I will neither quote from them, nor characterize them. I will tell you what Mr. O'Connell, an unsuspecting witness, says of them. He says, that 'the doctrines of the notes of the Rhemish Testaments are, that it is essential for a Roman Catholic to believe that it is lawful to murder Protestants, and to break faith with heretics.' Now these Rhemish notes were published with the approbation of twelve Bishops, and among these we find Dr. Troy, and Dr. Murray; the one, a trustee, the other a president of Maynooth.'—From the speech of Mr. COLQUHOUN, at Exeter Hall, 11th March, 1836.

The same doctrine is further enforced in *DENS' Theology*, so glaringly exposed at the different meetings recently held on the subject, throughout Great Britain; which work, as appears from a par-

ticular set of it, discovered in England, was published by Archbishop Murray's express approbation; 'ejus cum approbatione susceptum.' 'Here then we see Popery unchanged and unchangeable. After this, when the Archbishop asserts, that 'those doctrines are now little more than the record of by-gone intolerance,' *Credat Judæus Apella!* Oh, that they were!—But if any persons are now blinded as to the real character of the Papacy, their blindness must be wilful, and at their own imminent peril. They have had every fair warning.

NOTE IX. p. 40.

'Innumerable symptoms appear of a prevailing disposition to contemplate the doctrines of Popery with less disgust, and to witness their progress with less alarm, than has ever been known since the Reformation. All the zeal and activity are on one side; and while every absurdity is retained, and every pretension defended, which formerly drew upon Popery the indignation and abhorrence of all enlightened Christians, we should be ready to conclude from the altered state of public feeling, that a system once so obnoxious had undergone some momentous revolution. We seem, on this occasion, to have interpreted, in its most literal sense, the injunction of hoping all things, and believing all things. We persist in maintaining that the adherents to Popery are materially changed, in

contradiction to their express disavowal ; and while they make a boast of the infallibility of their creed, and the unalterable nature of their religion, we persist in the belief of its having experienced we know not what melioration and improvement. In most instances, when men are deceived, it is the effect of art and contrivance on the part of those who delude them : in this the deception originates with ourselves ; and, instead of bearing false witness against our neighbour, such is the excess of our candour, that we refuse to credit the unfavourable testimony which he bears of himself. There is, in the mean time, nothing reciprocal in this strange method of proceeding. We pipe to them, but they will not dance. Our concessions instead of softening and mollifying, seem to have no other effect upon them than to elate their pride, and augment their arrogance.' Rev. Robert HALL.

NOTE X. p. 41.

In making these assertions, to which he is urged by a sense of duty, the writer trusts that he is not actuated by any feelings of malevolence towards Roman Catholics ; but by the very reverse. He desires to love them all : even for their priests, as an *order*, he entertains the most heart-felt pity. He considers them, in many instances, blind leaders of the blind. Their minds are marred from the

outset: steeped in superstition from the cradle;
and,

' Quo semel est embuta recens, servabix odorem
Testa diu.'—

Maynooth is certainly not calculated to remove these early injurious impressions, and replace them by others, more generous and expanded. The writer's simple and sole aim is—to exhibit Popery as a *system*, with a view to the undeceiving of the falsely liberal, whether Protestants or Romanists: to all of whom he would address the solemn admonition of Scripture, "Go ye forth of Babylon, lest ye be partakers of her plagues."

NOTE XI. p. 43.

In exemplification of this, I quote 'the following from the Latin Office of the Virgin, p. 607, Antwerp, 1780.'

' O Domina mea sancta Maria,' &c. ' O my Lady, holy Mary, myself unto thy blessed trust and alone safe keeping (I commend) and into the bosom of thy mercy to-day, every day, and at the hour of my departure, I commend my soul and body to thee, my whole hope and my consolation, all my troubles and miseries, my life and the end of my life, I commit to thee, that by thy most holy intercession and by thy merits, all my works may be directed and disposed ACCORDING TO THINE AND THY SON'S WILL.'

‘ In the hymn *Ave Maria Stella*—Hail star of the Sea, the following lines occur to the virgin :’

“ Solve vincula reis.
Profer lumen cæcis.

Mala nostra pelle.
Bona cuncta posce.”

Loose the chains of the guilty.
Bring light to the blind.

Drive away your illa.
Ask all good things.

‘ The *Latin Office of the Virgin* which contains these prayers, so full of blasphemy and daring and besotted idolatry, is authenticated by the bulls of three popes, Pius V, Urban VIII, and Clement XIII. the first of which grants an indulgence of fifty days to whosoever, not bound to do so, shall devoutly recite the *Office of the Virgin*. The papal authority does therefore, in the most solemn and authentic manner, affix its seal to this idolatry and blasphemy, which places the WILL OF THE VIRGIN before that of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.’
—From Mr. WILLIAM CUNINGHAME’S Letter to the Editor of the RECORD.

‘ Let the reader observe another illustration taken from ‘ the *Mary Psalter* of Bonaventure,’ an author canonized by papal authority.’ He was usually styled the Seraphic Doctor. His works are in seven volumes folio.’

‘ The following is a copy of the fifty-first Psalm, answering to the fifty-second in Protestant Bibles :’

“ Quid gloriaris malitia : O maligne serpens et draco infernalis ?

“ Submitte caput tuum mulieri : cujus fortitudine demergeris in profundum.

“ Contere eum, Domina, pede virtutis tuæ : exurge et dissipa malitiam ejus.

“ Extingue potentiam ejus : et virtutem illius redige in favillam.

“ Ut viventes exultemus in nomine tuo ; et læto animo diramus tibi laudem.” “ Gloria Patri, &c.

‘ I need hardly draw attention to the blasphemous perversion of terms applied in Scripture exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ, particularly in the expressions. “ *Submit thy head to a woman,*” and “ *Bruise him, O Lady, with the foot of thy virtue.*”

Let the Protestant abettors of the Irish education scheme, see how they will answer it to their consciences, for giving their sanction to such sentiments as the above, in their extracts from the Bible for the use of the schools under the direction of the Board, in which the Popish comment on Gen. iii. 15, makes *the woman* (i. e. the Virgin) and not the seed of the woman, bruise the head of the serpent.

‘ In the same tractate with the *Mary Psalter*, are annexed eight canticles taken from Isaiah, Ezekiel, Anna, Moses, Habakkuk, the song of the Three Children, and Zacharias, beside the Te Deum, and the Athanasian Creed, all paraphrased and applied to the virgin Mary.’

From a Letter to the Editor of the Record,

Signed,

‘ NO PEACE WITH ROME.’

NOTE XII. p. 74.

‘ Indeed, to a candid and impartial observer, the striking similarity between the superstitions, which from this time, (the time of Constantine’s becoming sole Emperor,) were gradually incorporated with Christianity, and those of Pagan Rome, will be obvious.—

PAGAN ROME HAD—

Dii majorum gentium, or superior deities, among whom was the mother of the gods, and the queen of heaven.

Dii minorum gentium, or inferior deities, consisting of deified mortals.

The pagan Emperor, styled PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, his head-dress TIARA, assisted by the College of priests, priests of Cybele, and mendicant monks.

The vestal virgins vowed perpetual celibacy, and were distinguished by fillets on the head, and hence called *Vittatas*.

Her statues of gods and goddesses in different parts of the city, which were held in reverence and received divine honours.’

PAPAL ROME HAD—

Her superior deities, among whom, by confusing the two natures of Christ, she has a mother of God, and queen of heaven.

Inferior deities, consisting of canonized mortals or saints.

The Pope of Rome, styled PONTIFEX MAXIMUS, his head-dress TIARA, assisted by the college of Cardinals. The church of Rome infested with mendicant monks.

The nuns vow perpetual celibacy, and are distinguished by a veil worn on the head, and hence they are said to take the veil.

Enrolled those statues, without making any outward change among the objects of her reverence, and the Jupiters, the Junos, the Hercules of the heathen world are worshipped under the names of St. Paul, St. Peter, and the Virgin.

It would be a work of supererogation to point out the similarity of rites between Pagan and Papal

Rome—in the burning of candles on their altars at noon-day,—the sprinkling with sacred waters, and various other ceremonies common to both;—but we shall see hereafter, that not only the superstitions of Pagan Rome, but also the monstrous absurdities of those barbarous hordes by whom the Roman empire was overwhelmed, were incorporated with the rites of the Church.’—From an article entitled, ‘PROGRESS OF POPERY.’—No. IV. in the DUBLIN RECORD.

NOTE XIII. p. 55.

‘While Atheism, Deism, Socinianism, irreligion, profaneness, scepticism, formality, hatred of godliness, and a bitter, persecuting spirit, continue and increase among us, what can we expect but new and desolating judgments? For while we continue to walk thus contrary to God, we cannot but expect that he should walk contrary to us also. It is in vain for us to boast of our privileges, or plead exemption from judgment on this account. For where there is no national reformation and repentance, national sins are like to pull down miseries upon us, so much the sooner, and more certainly, that we have been so singularly and peculiarly privileged.’—
REV. ROBERT FLEMING.

‘I would not presage ill to my country, but when we consider the many heinous and presump-

tuous sins of the nation, the licentiousness and violation of all order and discipline, the daring insolence of robbers and smugglers, in open defiance of all law and justice, the factions and divisions, the venality and corruption, the avarice and profusion of all ranks and degrees among us, the total want of public spirit, and ardent passion for private ends and interests, the luxury and gaming and dissoluteness in high life, and the laziness and drunkenness, and debauchery in low life, and above all, that bare-faced ridicule of all virtue and decency, and that scandalous neglect, and I wish I could not say contempt, of all public worship and religion ; when we consider these things, these signs of the times, the stoutest and most sanguine of us all must tremble at the natural and probable consequences of them. God give us grace, that we may know, at least in this our day, the things which belong unto our peace, before they are hidden from our eyes.'—Luke xix. 42.—Bp. NEWTON'S Dissertation on the Prophecies, p. 387, 388 ; octavo edition.

‘ But with these grossnesses, religion on the other hand has declined ; God is forgotten : his providence is exploded : his hand is lifted up, but we see it not ; he multiplies our comforts, but we are not grateful ; he visits us with chastisements, but we are not contrite. The portion of the week set apart to the service of religion we give up, without reluctance, to vanity and dissipation. And it is much, if, on the periodical return of a day of national hu-

miliation, having availed ourselves of the certainty of an interval from public business to secure a meeting for convivial purposes, we do not insult the majesty of heaven, by feasting and jollity, and thus deliberately disclaim our being included in the solemn services of this season of penitence and recollection.'—WILBERFORCE'S View, p. 225.

NOTE XIV. p. 59.

'It is,' says Mr CUNNINGHAME, 'undeniable, that by the annual grant to the college of Maynooth, and also to the Irish National Education Scheme, these realms are already in a measure involved in the sin of national fornication with Rome. But the great and peculiar aggravation of the measure now proposed is, that it is to seize the revenues of a Church which inculcates the true worship of God, and is to devote them to uphold the system of another Church which is drenched in idolatry, by promoting education conducted upon its principles.'

This measure, then, must add in a fearful manner to our national sin. It is, as Mr. FABER justly terms it in a letter in the Standard of the 16th ult. 'a deliberate insult to the high majesty of Heaven.'

NOTE XV. p. 59.

'God is employing all political changes and con-

vulsions to introduce one great and permanent revolution,—the change of the kingdoms of this world, into the everlasting kingdom of the Saviour. And the changes are likely to increase in rapidity and intensity, the nearer we approach to the advent of the Universal King.’

‘ This country appears to be especially blessed by divine Providence with many mercies calculated to promote the enjoyment of perpetual peace. But there is no peace to the wicked; when men are not at peace with God through Christ, who is our peace as well as our righteousness, the arm of divine justice will reach them, however well secured, and however remote from the causes of strife. Unless nations repent, the sword, the pestilence, and the famine will be their ultimate portion. But if God would make the light of his countenance to shine upon us, and cause us to forsake those sins, on account of which he has a controversy against us, there is every thing in our situation favourable for the permanence of our tranquillity, and for preserving uninterrupted amity with every other country.

‘ But Britain is now weighed in the balance, and the days of her further prosperity may be found wanting! Her career of glory is already as long, and her measure of blessings as full as have ever been vouchsafed to any nation; she has enjoyed and *abused* greater mercies than were given to Israel of old; her freedom has been as ample and more lasting, than that of the ancient republics; and her commerce has taken a far wider range than that

of the once favoured cities of Tyre and Carthage, each, like her, for a season the mistress of the sea.' &c. —From DOUGLAS'S 'Prospects and Duty of Britain.'

To the foregoing remarks of these eminent individuals, the author is glad to annex the following from a leading article in the *London Record*: a Journal to which the country, the Church, and the world, are incalculably indebted.

'It is the highest honour of a nation to be a witness for the truth of God. The outward means which God has chosen for this purpose has been *His Word*, and this word held forth, vindicated, and honoured by his people. For a long period the Jewish nation held this honourable and distinguished post, and they were assured by their Divine lawgiver that if they continued to maintain the honour of his name among the nations of the earth, he would defend them, and make them a happy and prosperous people as long as the sun and moon endured. We all know that as long as they maintained their testimony they were blessed—that when they forgot God he visited them in judgment, and that at last, in consequence of their apostacy from him and multiplied provocations from generation to generation, he poured his wrath out upon them to the uttermost, and they remain till this day living witnesses of the justice and severity of God.

'A far clearer revelation of the Divine will has been entrusted to this nation than was conferred on

the Jewish people. The shadows of their dispensation have flown away, and the true light of the Gospel fully shines upon this Protestant nation. And if they who disobeyed Moses' law perished without mercy, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which the last generation alone of the Jews who inhabited Canaan had the opportunity to reject, and which rejection was followed by consequences so tremendous. We are practically and nationally rejecting God. His commands are treated in our great national Assembly with as little respect as those of Mahomet—nay, they are made the subjects of laughter and ribaldry. No doubt there are many private Christians in this country at the present day, as there were great multitudes in Judea at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. No doubt the sound of the Gospel has gone out from this country into all lands, as it formerly did, with an incomparably more penetrating and palpable effect, from Jerusalem, previous to its destruction and the national dispensation. But if, under these favourable circumstances in Judea, 'God spared not the natural branches,' upon the *national* rejection of the Saviour, what security can we possess that, under a similar *national* rejection by this people, he will spare 'the branches of the wild olive-tree?' The preaching of the Gospel in Jerusalem and Judea, in the first age of Christianity, and the myriads of conversions that took place among the Jews, only aggravated the *national* guilt in the continued *national*

rejection of the Gospel; and the exhibition of a similar spectacle in this country, in this day, assuredly only aggravates to an incalculable extent the *national* guilt, in practically and in very deed declaring that the revelation of God to man is no more entitled to our national regard than the fables of the Koran.

‘We accordingly entreat the religious part of this nation, as they love their country and fear their God, to gather themselves together into an attitude of the most determined opposition to these *national* acts, and that tone and style of discussion in our great national assembly, by which it seems to be generally conceded and proclaimed to the world that, **NATIONALLY**, we know not God. Let us unite as one man in the use of suitable means to oppose the progress of the nation in this daring course of unblushing impiety, which, if not arrested, we have reason to fear, will, ere long, bring down the judgments of God upon us to the uttermost.’

NOTE XVI. p. 108.

‘I meet not either in sacred or profane writ with so terrible a rout as Saul gave to the host of the Ammonites, under Nahash their king. 1 Sam. xi. 11. “And it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.” And yet have we daily ex-

perience of greater scatterings and dissipations of men in their opinions.

‘ Suppose ten men of pretended purity, but real pride and peevishness, make a wilful separation from the Church of England, possibly they may continue some competent time in tolerable unity together. Afterwards upon a new discovery of a higher and holier way of divine service, these ten will split asunder into five and five, and the purer moiety divide from the other as more drossy and feculent. Then the five in process of time, upon the like occasion of clearer illumination will cleave into three and two. Some short time after, the three will crumble into two and one, till they come into the condition of the Ammonites, so scattered, that two of them were not left together.

‘ I am sad that I may add with too much truth, that one man will at last be divided in himself, distracted often in his judgment betwixt many opinions, so that what is reported of Tostatus, lying on his death-bed, may be true of him; ‘ in multitudine controversarium non habuit quod crederit;’ amongst the multitude of persuasions through which he had passed, he knoweth not where to cast anchor, and fix himself at last.’—FULLER.

NOTE XVII. p. 136.

‘ For what are the facts that strike the mind ? What effects can we trace of the leaven of the Gos-

pel? Has no salt seasoned the land? Has nothing been cast into the bitter waters to make them sweet? Can we not distinguish the recognition of a purer standard of holiness? of the details of Christian duty? of the obligations of an holy law? of the doctrine of love in all its enlarged bearings? Have we not reason to be thankful for the dissemination of scriptural knowledge—for the progress of personal religion—the increase of real piety—the doctrine of a merely nominal and formal profession? Are we to consider as nothing the voluntary associations for the diffusion of the Gospel—the circulation of the word of God—the planting of missions—the elevation of the tone of public sentiment—the abolition of many old unchristian usages—the struggles for facilitating the observance of the Lord's day—the countenance and respect paid to a consistent profession of the Gospel—the approach toward a more scriptural standard of doctrine and practice, which marks the free course of the word of the Lord, and enlarged acquaintance with revealed truth, a peculiar effusion of divine grace? Irreligion may disfigure the face of the land for a time—infidelity may stalk abroad—superstition may raise its head again—defects and corruptions, and ignorance, and sins enough to call down daily the divine displeasure, may be too prevalent, even in the christian world,—but it is no longer a desert, it is not now a wilderness; waters and streams and rivers of living water have broken out—fountains of life have been opened—Christian churches are

planted and flourish—the gospel, however imperfectly obeyed, is recognised as authoritative—Christian sympathy, and Christian forbearance are called into action—a spirit of charity is increasingly cherished—the high-way of our God is marked out—a way of holiness is opened—of holy worship, and of holy conversation. Mercies surround us on every side. God has visited his people. Well may we take up the words of the Psalmist, and say,—“He sheweth his word unto us, as he did unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.” “He hath not dealt so with any nation.” “He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God.” “He hath given free course to his own word and glorified it.”—From a Sermon on 2 Thess. iii. 1. preached at Windsor Castle, before their most Excellent Majesties, on Sunday, Oct. 4. 1835, by CHARLES RICHARD SUMNER, D.D. Lord Bishop of Winchester.’

‘The signs of the times at present, in regard to the prospect of a great increase of spirit and effort for the propagation of the Gospel, are decidedly encouraging. There is a renovating hand at work in various sections of the Protestant Church. The revival of religion in the ministry, and among the members of that venerated parent Church, through which we love to remember that our own articles of faith, and our beloved liturgy, and our apostolic order, and our holy Scriptures, were derived, and between which and ourselves I hope the sense of

special relationship, and the desire of entire co-operation in all common labours, may continually increase,—the revival of religion in the Church of our mother country during the last forty years, now proceeding more hopefully than ever, exhibiting its blessings in a mind of special spirituality and scriptural simplicity, and in a zeal to promote the Gospel, of remarkable beauty and wisdom, so that her noble universities are deeply feeling the renovating influence, and the whole Church may be regarded, notwithstanding her present secular troubles, as more prosperous spiritually, more lovely in holiness, more vigorous in effort, more united in counsel, and more rapidly preparing for every good work, than at any preceding era of her history; this (I say) *is one of the signs of the times*, which all the world may see.’—From a Sermon before the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Aug. 24. 1835, by the Right Rev. C. P. Mc ILWAINE, D. D. Bishop of Ohio. pp. 19, 20.

The following testimony borne by a good authority, is also of a very encouraging character.—

‘Amid all the agitations and discouraging circumstances of the times in which we live, the Author views with the sincerest pleasure, the progress of theological knowledge, and the increasing number of pious students preparing at our universities for holy orders; the ardor and zeal with which im

portant studies are now prosecuted ; and the various public measures by which they have been promoted. Those who lived even a few years back, will have seen a very perceptible change for the better.— From Preface to Rev. E. BICKERSTETH's ' Christian Student,' a work abounding with valuable information and Christian instruction.

The following will also be read with interest.

' The advancement of the Bible as the great and only standard of Christian faith and practice, is a fourth remarkable feature of our times. The Scriptures have always been professedly received as the highest authority among Christians ; but never was that authority so publicly and completely recognised, as in the present age. The Church of Rome early impaired, and at length almost entirely abolished, the authority of the sacred volume, by her multiplied additions to its contents, as well as by her extreme ignorance of its genuine instructions. Her priests were exalted from humble ministers of the word into arbitrary *legislators* : for he that hath the power of annexing to the law whatever interpretation he may please, is not an administrator of the law, but a *tyrant*. As an instance of the disuse and oblivion into which the Scriptures had fallen among the Romish Clergy, it is related of the celebrated missionary Xavier, that, having met with a copy of part of the New Testament before his going out to India, he resolved to take it with him, as he thought it might be of use in his mis-

sionary labours. What a change in the state of the Christian World, with regard to the estimation in which the Scriptures are held, has taken place since the days of Xavier ! That eminent person—who possessed, one would hope, amid all his errors, some real piety—thought he might as well take part of the New Testament with him, when he went as a missionary to India ; he conceived it might possibly be of some use ! The Bible is now carried abroad in the front of the ministry ; and the missionary preachers aim, as much as possible, to lose themselves in the effulgence of its heavenly light.’—Rev. ROBERT HALL. Sermon on ‘ The signs of the times.’ Vol. vi. 260, 261.

How cheering and encouraging also to the friends of truth is the following statement. It opens a very glorious vista of hope for Ireland. That afflicted island may yet again become, ere long, an island of saints. ‘ The present are extraordinary times for Ireland, and pregnant with coming events. A movement in religion as well as politics is undoubted in progress. Daniel O’Connell, at the head of an immense variegated multitude, is labouring to revolutionize the state ; while the Irish Roman Catholic priesthood, by becoming his abettors in opposition to their duty as ministers of the Gospel, are preparing the way for the reformation of their Church. The success or failure of any religion, abstracting from its merits or demerits, must depend in a great measure upon the good or

bad conduct of its ministers, or upon the estimation in which they are held ; from which consideration it would seem to follow, that the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland, notwithstanding its present domineering attitude, is hastening to its downfall. The priests are every where disgusting their people by the profanation of their ministry, and are held in abhorrence on the same account by those of a different communion. A religion or a Church so circumstanced cannot be supposed to extend itself, or to make proselytes ; and a revolt against its authority may be expected speedily to break out among its followers. Religion in Ireland, considered in general, presents an odd picture of contrarieties and inconsistencies. The Irish Protestant church seems threatened with destruction by the curtailment of its establishment, and the abstraction of its temporalities, and yet, in various quarters the tide of public opinion is beginning to flow in favour of the Protestant religion. Roman Catholics in great numbers, frequent the Protestant churches, listen to Protestant sermons, imbibe Protestant principles, renounce, many of them, their own discriminating opinions and observances, and openly embrace the Protestant communion. Defections of this kind by wholesale, are going on in various parts of this country. Even Roman Catholic priests, who should be good authority in such matters, pass over in greater numbers than ever to the Protestant establishment, notwithstanding all the present disadvantages under which

it labours. Thus while the Protestant Church is menaced with destruction, the Protestant religion is gaining ground. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church appears at first view to be making rapid strides to ascendancy. It is multiplying its establishments in all quarters, founding abbeys, and monasteries, and nunneries ; erecting grand edifices for public worship ; establishing schools and seminaries throughout the length and breadth of the land. Its bishops, without the recognition of law, or rather contrary to law, require to be addressed as barons or peers of the empire. Its deans and vicars, and parish priests, and curates, appear to the people as men of mighty consequence and authority. Yet, notwithstanding this imposing display, the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland is in a tottering state, and likely at no distant period to vanish like the fabric of a vision, and leave not a wreck behind. The discipline for which it was remarkable in times past, has now no existence. The bishops and priests merely hang together. There is little or no subordination. Diocesan statutes are a dead letter ; the canon law is a dead letter ; almost every priest exercises a separate or independent jurisdiction, and acts according to individual caprice. They are more prompt to pay obedience to an instruction from Daniel O'Connell, than to a rescript from his holiness the pope. The truth is, they hold together more as politicians than religionists ; and their very appellation of Roman Catholics, has merged into a mere party

word. Such a body may be called a turbulent political community, but are unworthy the title of a Christian Church. This Church, or rather section, of the population, may present an imposing appearance while the spirit of faction continues ; but when that expires, and it will have to rest for support on its religious character, which is a nullity, down it must fall and be levelled to the dust, with all its grandeur and magnificence.'—From the preface to a farewell address to the Roman Catholics of the Diocese of Cork, by the Rev. D. O' CROLY, R. C. Priest.

It is surely a signal feature in the age, and one full of glorious promise, when so many of the Roman Catholic priesthood are thus abandoning that apostate Church ; and that too, at a time when such a step unavoidably involves so very considerable a sacrifice of income, as must be incurred in relinquishing their gainful parishes, yielding to them often several hundreds a year, and coming over to an Establishment so persecuted and impoverished, as is the Irish Protestant Church at present. When such things occur, we may safely augur, that the downfall of Popery, whatever intermediate ascendancy it may be permitted to enjoy, is not far distant. What is the prognostic afforded in the book of inspiration with regard to this very event ? When the mystic Babylon becomes the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird ; and the Lord's people obey his sum-

mons, to come out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins, and they receive not of her plagues. See Revelation xviii. 1—5.

We conclude these animating testimonies with the following from the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN for September 1836.

‘ Our little work commenced in the midst of a mighty struggle for the maintenance of truth, and when it seemed doubtful what might be the issue. But what is the aspect of affairs now, and particularly so in that section of the church with which we are more immediately connected? A spirit of revival appears to have pervaded the entire body. There has been an unprecedented increase of churches and congregations, averaging not less than ten in every year; there has been a remarkable enlargement in the liberality of the members of the church, pounds being now raised with almost as much facility as shillings were formerly; the missionary spirit has extended everywhere, so that a church without its organized missionary associations begins to be looked upon as a strange thing; there is a growing regard to the exercise of godly discipline; and the standard of the church,¹ long trampled in the dust by the enemies of truth and righteousness, has been lifted up again, and established upon a basis, from which, we believe, it will be vain ever to attempt to move it. The present age seems to be characterized by the extensive-

¹ The Westminster Confession of Faith.

ness of its preparations for labour. As the world was prepared for the first coming of Christ, by the subjugation of almost all nations to one mighty kingdom, and the universal prevalence of peace, so that the way was open for the preachers of the cross, through all lands; so in these times the world seems ripening for the coming of Christ, in the power of his word and Spirit, to subdue all nations to himself, by the numerous and various plans of Christian enterprize everywhere to be seen. What provisions are made for circulating the word of God,—for sending out the missionaries of the cross to all lands,—for promoting education at home and abroad,—for facilitating the progress of the forerunners of the Messiah! Again we may say, “every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.” The vast improvements in commerce and science will be auxiliaries to the cause of Christ. The world is in the attitude of waiting and expectation, while the church stands ready, in the most extensive preparation, for the universal spread of truth and godliness.’

NOTE XVIII. p. 147.

‘It is said of Epicurus, that, in the dreadful fit of the cholic, he often refreshed himself by calling to mind his inventions in philosophy; and of Possidonius the philosopher, that, in a great fit of the stone, he solaced himself with discourses of

moral virtue; and when the pain twinged him he would say, 'O pain, thou dost nothing; though thou art a little troublesome; I will never confess thee to be evil.' If upon such grounds as these they could support themselves under such grinding and racking pains, and even delude their diseases by them, how much rather should the precious promises of God, and the sweet experiences which have gone along step by step with them, make you to forget all your wants, and comfort you in every strait.'—FLAVEL'S Saint Indeed.

' Labour to clear this to your own souls, that you are savingly called. " Give diligence to make your calling sure." 2 Peter i. 10. This is the great business of our lives, to get sound evidences of our effectual calling. Acquiesce not in outward privileges; do not cry as the Jews, " the temple of the Lord;" Jer. vii. 4. Rest not in baptism! what is it to have the water and want the Spirit? Be not content that Christ hath been preached to you; satisfy not yourselves with an empty profession; all this may be, and yet you may be no better than blazing comets; but labour to evidence to your souls that you are called of God. Be not Athenians, to inquire news. What is the state and complexion of the times? What changes are likely to happen in such a year? What is all this if you are not effectually called? What if the times should have a fairer aspect? What though glory did dwell in our land, if grace does not dwell in

our hearts? O my brethren, when things are dark without, let all be clear within, give diligence to make your calling sure; it is both feasible and probable. God is not wanting to them that seek him. Let not this great business hang in hand any longer. If there were a controversy about your land, you would use all means to clear your title. And is salvation nothing? Will you not clear your title here? Consider how sad your case is, if you are not effectually called.'—WATSON'S "*Divine Cordial*." Chap. vi.

NOTE XIX. p. 177.

The author inserts the following extracts from another non-conformist divine, as deeming them a most suitable and valuable appendix to the foregoing chapter.

'How a christian may keep his heart from distracting and tormenting fears in times of great and threatening dangers.'

'Now there are fourteen excellent rules or helps for keeping the heart from sinful fear when imminent dangers threaten us, and the first is this:—

'RULE 1. Look upon all the creatures as in the hand of God, who manages them in all their motions, limiting, restraining, and determining them all at his pleasure.

'RULE 2. Remember, that this God, in whose hand all the creatures are, is your Father, and is much more tender over you, than you are or can

be over yourselves. "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye."

'RULE 3. He hath charged you not to fear; "When ye shall hear of wars and commotions, see that ye be not terrified." "And in nothing be terrified by your adversaries." Yea, in Matt. x. 26, 28—31, and within the compass of six verses, our Saviour commands us thrice not to fear man. Methinks the command of Christ should have as much power to calm, as the voice of a poor worm to terrify thy heart; "I, even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?"

'RULE 4. Remember how much needless trouble your vain fears have brought upon you formerly, and how you have disquieted yourselves to no purpose: "And hast feared continually because of the oppressor, as if he were ready to devour; and where is the fury of the oppressor?" He seemed ready to devour, but yet you are not devoured.

'RULE 5. Consider solemnly, that though the things you fear should really fall out, yet there is more evil in your own fear than in the thing feared. And that, not only as the least evil of sin is worse than the greatest evil of suffering; but as this sinful fear has really more torment and trouble in it, than is in that condition you are so much afraid of.

'RULE 6. Consult the many precious promises which are written for your support and comfort in

all dangers. These are your refuges, to which you may fly and be safe; "when the arrows of danger fly by night, and destruction wasteth at noonday."

· 'RULE 7. Quiet your trembling hearts by recording and consulting your past experiences of the care and faithfulness of God in former distresses. These experiences are food for your faith in a wilderness condition. By this David kept his heart in time of danger, 1 Sam. xvii. 37, and St. Paul his, 2 Cor. i. 10. It was sweetly answered by Silentarius, when one told him that his enemies way-laid him to take away his life,—' If God take no care of me, how have I escaped hitherto? '

'RULE 8. Be well satisfied that you are in the way of your duty, and that will beget holy courage in times of danger. "Who will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good?" Or if any dare attempt it, "you may boldly commit yourselves to God in well-doing." It was this consideration that raised Luther's spirit above all fear: 'In the cause of God,' said he, 'I ever am, and ever shall be stout: herein I assume this title, *Cedo nulli*; a good cause will bear up a man's spirit bravely.' 'Righteousness is a breast-plate: '

'RULE 9. Get your consciences sprinkled with the blood of Christ from all guilt, and that will set your hearts above all fear. It is guilt upon the conscience that softens and cowardizes our spirits: "the righteous are bold as a lion." It was guilt in Cain's conscience that made him cry, "Every one that meets me shall slay me."

‘ **RULE 10.** Exercise holy trust in times of great distress. Make it your business to trust God with your lives and comforts, and then your hearts will be at rest about them. So did David ; “ At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.” q. d. “ Lord, if at any time a storm arise, I will make bold to shelter from it under the covert of thy wings.” Go to God by acts of faith and trust, and never doubt but he will secure you.

‘ **RULE 11.** Consult the honour of religion more, and your personal safety less. Is it for the honour of religion, think you, that Christians should be as timorous as hares, to start at every sound ? Will not this tempt the world to think, that whatever you talk, yet your principles are no better than other men’s ? O what mischief may the discovery of your fears before them do ! It was a noble saying of Nehemiah, “ Should such a man as I flee ? and who, being as I am, would flee ? ” Were it not better you should die, than that the world should be prejudiced against Christ by your example ?

‘ **RULE 12.** He who will secure his heart from fear, must first secure the eternal interest of his soul in the hands of Jesus Christ. When this is done, then you may say, now, world, do thy worst ! You will not be very solicitous about a vile body, when you are once assured it shall be well to all eternity with your precious soul.

‘ **RULE 13.** Learn to quench all slavish creature fears, in the reverential fear of God. ‘ This

method of cure Christ prescribes in that forementioned place, Matt. x. Like to which is that in Isaiah viii. 12, 13. "Fear not their fear." But how shall we help it? Why, "sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread."

'RULE 14. Lastly, pour out those fears to God in prayer, which the Devil and your own unbelief pour in upon you in times of danger. Prayer is the best outlet to fear. Where is the Christian that cannot set his *probatum est* to this direction?' Abbreviated from FLAVEL'S 'Saint Indeed.'

NOTE XX. p. 189.

EZEKIEL xl. 2. 'There are several circumstances which conclusively show, that something exceedingly superior to either the first or second temple was intended, and that the external description must be considered as a figure and emblem of spiritual blessings. (Note xli. 22.) This will appear in many particulars, as we proceed; but especially the dimensions of the temple, city, and land; and the division of the land to the prince, priests, and tribes; and the river of water springing from the threshold of the temple, enlarging till it reached the dead sea, and sweetening its waters; with "the trees" growing on "the banks of the river, bearing fruit every month;" cannot be literally interpreted, or made to accord with any thing which has yet taken place.' xli. 5, 22, "The altar of wood" must signify that on which incense

was burned. The dimensions are here much larger than those mentioned in Exodus ; but that made by Solomon is supposed to have been much larger than that made by Moses. Both of these, however, were covered with gold : *and it is very remarkable, that in this temple described by Ezekiel, there is not the least mention made of gold or silver ;* though there were such a profusion of these metals, both in the tabernacle made by Moses, and in Solomon's temple. *Does not this imply, that a glory of a more spiritual nature was intended under these emblems?* ' This is the table,' &c. May not an intimation be here given, that under the New Testament, a table would be substituted for the altars of the Old Testament, in that ordinance, by which we are admitted into the nearest communion with our God and Father.'—REV. T. SCOTT'S Commentary.

NOTE XXI. p. 196.

' It would scarcely be a demonstration of bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, were our souls to be lifted up in high speculation or bold dogmatizing, concerning visions yet unexpounded by events, or were we to maintain that any peculiar *mode* of interpretation should be held as a matter of faith, as to what shall be—or what shall not be ; when at the *end* the vision shall *speak*, and not *lie*, and refute all the fallacies, that marred its form, and perhaps, at least could but mimic its effect.'—KEITH'S Signs of the Times. Vol ii. p. 286, 287.

NOTE XXII. p. 206.

‘ But if “ the Spirit were poured upon us from on high : ” the hearts of such persons would expand with holy affections, and be filled with divine consolations. They would become fervent in every religious duty, and earnest in prayer for their ministers and brethren, and for a blessing on every attempt to propagate the Gospel ; they would bestow pains to impress the instructions of Scripture on the minds of their children, relatives, and servants ; to recommend the truth by their example, and to enforce it in their conversation. They would say to those, with whom they had any influence, “ Come ye, and let us go to the house of God, and he will teach us of his way, and we will walk in his paths.” Isa. ii. 3. And, as Andrew brought Peter, and Philip, Nathaniel, to an acquaintance with Christ ; they would endeavour, by letters, books, and all other means in their power, to lead such as had been strangers to the Gospel, to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and into the way of life and salvation.’—REV. THOMAS SCOTT: Sermon “ On the Agency of the Holy Spirit.”

NOTE XXIII. p. 212.

‘THE number of our fellow-men now ignorant of the gospel cannot be definitely ascertained. The common estimate, which fixes the number of Pagans and Mahomedans at 600,000,000, is probably not far from correct. The number of Papists and other nominal christians, who are almost without exception destitute of the bible, and of the spirit of Christianity, is about 150,000,000. The whole number is 750,000,000. These must all, without exception, receive the gospel.’—From ‘THE LAST COMMAND,’ &c. An American Tract.

‘We cannot reflect,’ says the venerable Mr. Scott, ‘on the condition in which the nations remain to this day, without lamenting, that so large a proportion of the earth is still covered with Pagan darkness, Mahometan delusion, or Jewish incredulity. The ignorance, superstition, and wickedness of nominal christians, the prevalence of anti-scriptural tenets even in the Protestant Churches, and the rapid progress of impiety, infidelity, and atheism, present a very gloomy prospect to the mind of a true believer.’—SERMON on the Agency of the Holy Spirit.

‘Though the pure doctrines of Christ have been extensively proclaimed, and liberal love has been manifested by many a member of the Church of

Christ, yet still, through our land, how extended also is the reign of formal religion ! The men of light, zeal, and love, may be counted by units. In one English diocese, out of a population of 150,000, the attendants at church amounted to 19,169, and the communicants to 4134 ; about one in seven only attending church, about one in thirty-eight only attending the Lord's table ! Do not such documents almost go to prove that we are still, in effect, an unchristianized land ?'—REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH, in Sermon before the Church Missionary Society, April 30, 1832.

NOTE XXIV. p. 214.

' THE rain is not more necessary to raise the seed, the sun is not more necessary to bring it to maturity, than this work of the Spirit. Hence I would observe, prayer appears to be of the utmost importance in connection with every attempt for the conversion of the heathen nations. Prayer touches the only spring that can possibly ensure success. By speaking we move man ; but by prayer we move God. It is through the medium of prayer that the littleness and meanness of man prevail with Omnipotence. ' The prayer of faith ' is the only power of the universe to which the great Jehovah yields. He looks upon every other power as more or less opposed to him ; but he looks upon this as a confession of man's dependence, as an appropriate homage to his greatness, as an attraction which brings down his divine agency to the earth.

There every one may assist missions ; and every tear in the closet, every pang in the heart over the miseries of those who are dead in their sins, every prayer lifted up in that retirement where no eye sees but the eye of Him "which seeth in secret," affords a most important benefit. These are the elements of success ; these the pledges of final triumph.'—REV. ROBERT HALL. See his Sermon entitled, 'The success of Missions depends upon the Spirit.'

NOTE XXV. p. 216.

'To have our minds and hearts more set upon the best state of things that it is possible the church should ever arrive to on earth, than upon the state of perfect felicity above, is a very great distemper, and which we ought to reckon intolerable by any means to indulge ourselves in. We ought to live in the continual expectation of dying, and of coming to a better state than the Church can ever be in here. It argues a great infirmity, a distemper in our spirits, that we should reflect upon with severity, if we should be more curious to see a good state of things in this world, than to see the best that can be, and infinitely better than we can think, in heaven.'—REV. JOHN HOWE. First Sermon on Ezekiel xxxix. 29.

NOTE XXVI. p. 226.

'If God have provided such a multitude of pleasant things for the entertainment of this poor

body in this present life, what are the joys and delights which he hath prepared for my better part in the life which is to come ! This is the world of bodies, the other of souls and spirits. Therefore if this little carcase, which is but as the grass of the field be so well accommodated,—if there be so many rare things in the earth, and the sea, and the air, for its refreshment and pleasure, what may I not expect hereafter for my mind, in those celestial, those spacious regions which I see above. Oh the inconceivable felicity which is provided in the paradise of God, for this more wide and capacious spirit, which bears his own image, and like himself, is to live for ever ! Again you may think with yourself, if there be such pleasure to be found in a creature, what is there then in the Creator of all ! If the sight of the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the rest of the beauties of this world be so glorious, what will it be to see my God, to be filled with that wisdom which contrived, and with that goodness which produced, this goodly and comely fabric ! If the melodies of music be so charming, oh what an ecstasy of joy will it cast me into, to hear God himself say, I love thee, I delight in thee for ever ! If the love of a true friend do so much ravish and transport my spirit, what pleasure is it that I shall feel, when my soul shall love him as much as its most enlarged powers will enable it, and know how much I am beloved by him ! There is a delicious meditation in St. Austin to this effect ; who thus speaks to God in one of his confessions ;

‘ I love thee, O my God, thou hast smitten my heart with thy word, and I have loved thee. Nay, the heavens and the earth, and all things contained therein, admonish me on every side, that I should love thee ; and they cease not to say the same to all men else, so that they are inexcusable, if they do not love thee. But what do I love when I love thee ? Not the beauty of a body ; not the grace and comeliness of time, not the brightness of light ; (and yet how friendly and agreeable is that to these eyes !) not the sweet melody of well-composed songs ; not the fragrant odour of flowers, unguents, or costly spices ; not manna, not honey ; not the embraces of the dearest and most lovely person ; these are not the things that I love, when I love my God. And yet I love a certain light, and a certain voice, and a certain grateful odour, and a certain food, and a kind of embracement, when I love my God ; the true light, the melody, the food, the satisfaction, and the embracement of my inward man. Where that shines to my soul, which no place can contain ; where that sounds, which no time can snatch away : where that scents, which no wind can dissipate and scatter abroad ; where I taste that which eating cannot diminish ; where I cleave to that, which no fulness, no satiety can force away. This is that which I love, when I love my God. And what is this ? I asked the earth, and it said, I am not. I asked the sea, and the deeps, and all living creatures, and they answered, we are not thy God ; look above us, and

inquire after him, for here he is not. I asked the air, and its inhabitants, yea, the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, and they confessed, we are not him whom thy soul seeketh. And I spake to all things whatsoever that stand round about the gates of my flesh, saying, ye tell me that you are not my God, but tell me something of him. And they all cried out with a loud voice, He made us. Look therefore how great, how goodly, how glorious, how beautiful and pleasant we are, and he is incomparably more bright, more sweet, more harmonious, more filling and content than the whole world, which is but his creature.' From Bishop PATRICK's 'Advice to a Friend.' Letter iii.

NOTE XXVII. p 250.

'The power of action is from God, but the viciousness of that action from our own nature. As when a clock or watch hath some fault in any of the wheels, the man that winds it up, on putting his hand upon the wheels, moves them; he is the cause of the motion; but it is the flaw in it, or deficiency of something, which is the cause of the erroneous motion; that error was not from the person that made it, or the person that winds it up, and sets it a-going, but from some other cause; yet, till it be mended, it will not go otherwise, so long as it is set upon motion. Our motion is from God; "in him we move," but not the disorder of that motion. 'Tis the foulness of a man's stomach

at sea, is the cause of his sickness, and not the pilot's government of the ship.'—CHARNOCK on Divine providence. p. 52, 53.

NOTE XXVIII. p. 254.

In removing the righteous, and sparing the wicked, God, even to our imperfect comprehension, may have wise and merciful designs. In the first place, he thus gives the latter, space to repent: not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Besides, he employs them as involuntary agents in advancing the cause of his church and people. He serves himself of all his creatures. Again, with respect to the righteous, they are taken away from the evil to come; they enter into rest, each one walking in his uprightness. And while Jehovah thus graciously calls them from their labours below, to serve him in his sanctuary above; he reproves our idolatrous confidence in created instruments of good; exercises our faith in himself, and glorifies his own power and beneficence in raising up others in their place, to execute his pleasure. Thus, though "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."

NOTE XXIX. p. 254.

‘ View providences in their connection. A harsh touch single, would not be pleasing, but may rarely affect the concert ; the providences of God have a just proportion to one another, and are beautiful in their entire scheme, but when regarded apart, we shall come far short of a delightful understanding of them. As in a piece of arras folded up, and afterwards particularly opened, we see the hand or foot of a man, the branch of a tree,—or, if we look on the outside we see nothing but knots and threads, and uncouth shapes, that we know not what to make of, but when it is fully opened, and we have the whole web before us, we see what histories and pleasing characters are interwoven in it.’—CHARNOCK on Providence.

NOTE XXX. p. 261.

‘ Let us then, I repeat, prepare for the impending crisis, in that spirit which alone can enable us to meet it. Let us array ourselves in the whole armour of God. Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ. All weapons of our own forging must fail. They have been long tried ; and they have been tried in vain. If we go forth against our enemies, in dependance on an arm of flesh, we miscalculate the force to which we are opposed. For in that case, human adversaries are but instruments ; the real

controversy is with God. Not because he has a favour to our enemies, but because he has a favour unto us, and because he is a jealous God towards those who professedly maintain his cause. Persuaded I am, that until we throw ourselves unreservedly upon him, till we fall back on God, and take up our position on the Rock of ages, discomfiture and defeat will baffle and confound us in every effort.

‘ But some may say, ‘ We grant these theories to be true, but what can individuals do ? Where is the controlling and disposing mind, to combine their movements and direct them to a common point ? ’ To this I answer, that there is an all-disposing Mind on high. Let us, then, do our own part. Let us arm ourselves with the mind that was in Christ Jesus. Let our light shine forth in the triumphs of his patience, the splendour of his innocence, and the victorious energy of his love. Let us stand thus equipped as Christian soldiers, and we shall not want a leader. God will teach our hands to war and our fingers to fight. Our cause will be the cause of heaven ; and we shall go forth conquering and to conquer.’—‘ Essays by the Rev. HENRY WOODWARD.’

NOTE XXXI. p. 267.

‘ All earthly portions are insufficient portions ; they cannot prevent afflictions, nor support the soul under afflictions, nor mitigate afflictions, nor deliver

a man from afflictions. They cannot arm the soul against temptations, nor comfort the soul under temptations, nor lead the soul out of temptations. All the creatures in the world are but as so many ciphers without God ; when God frowns, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to cheer the soul ; when God withdraws, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to sustain the soul ; when God clouds his face, all the creatures in the world are not sufficient to make it day with the soul. There is not enough in the whole creation to content one immortal soul ; he that hath most of the world, would have more ; and he that hath least of the world, hath enough, if his soul can but truly say, " The Lord is my portion."—
BROOKES.

How beautifully are the same scriptural sentiments expressed by the Poet of Olney :—

' Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, eternal Word !
From thee departing, they are lost and rove,
At random, without honour, hope, or peace.
From thee is all that soothes the life of man,
His high endeavour, and his glad success,
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
But O thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown !
Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor ;
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.'

The TASK, Book v. Conclusion.

THE END.



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